

NMC misses deadline set by WASC

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

Northern Marianas College's accreditation remains in the balance after it missed the Wednesday deadline set by the federal government for updates regarding the finalization of La Fiesta's transfer to the CNMI government.

NMC Board of Regents chair Kimberlyn King-Hinds said that the memorandum of agreement between the college and the Executive Branch is still unofficial. The Governor's Office has yet to give a definite date when the agreement will be signed, she added.

A three-member team from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, which is now preparing its report on its October visit to NMC, had given NMC until Dec. 8 to submit any updates or additional information on its finances.

NMC's accreditation is currently on hold.
See NMC on Page 12

Finance chief refutes criticisms on delayed rebates

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

The Finance Secretary dismissed as "wild accusations" the criticism that the administration is playing favorites in the release of tax rebates and refunds.

Finance Secretary Fermin

Atalig said in an interview yesterday that the release of the rebate and refund checks is neither dependent on political leaning nor family relations.

"That's a wild accusation. I don't know that exists. We're giving out rebates to people regardless of their political affiliations. It doesn't make a

difference if you're Republican, Democrat, or Covenant. We're paying out across party lines," said Atalig.

This came about after concerned individuals expressed their disappointment



Atalig

with how the Tax and Revenue Division issues out rebate checks. A number of individuals cited that rebate checks are issued to people who are close to the administration and those who work

in establishments frequented by top government officials.

"Do we have to serve them first or be close to them? Do we have to beg for our rebates?" asked a resident who requested anonymity.

Atalig said that, while some rebate checks have been issued

See FINANCE on Page 12

Rats invade Kagman crops

Overwhelmed farmers appeal to govt for help

By SHAN SEMAN
REPORTER

An infestation of rats in Kagman has prompted farmers at the Kagman Com-

mercial Farm Plot to appeal to the government for assistance in controlling the problem.

"We have a big problem with rats," said farmer Isidoro T. Cabrera. "Every night, farmers experience damage to their crops, including vegetables, fruits,

and roots crops. The rats are eating up the money that's supposed to be made from selling these crops."

Cabrera said rats in the area have destroyed about 30-50 percent of saleable crops.

"Farmers are losing up to 50 percent of their harvest," he said. "It's a perennial problem...the population suddenly just exploded and there's just too many to deal with. They come at night and eat the crops that hard work is

See RATS on Page 12



Cabrera

Brown ouster sought

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

Former Senate President Juan S. Demapan filed with the Superior Court yesterday a taxpayer's lawsuit that seeks to declare that Pamela Brown has been holding the CNMI Attorney General post unlawfully, resulting in the unlawful expenditure of public funds

through payment of her salary and expenses.

The legal action came days after Brown's office blocked the release of some \$3.45 million from the government's Land Compensation Fund to the Malite estate, which was represented by lawyers Pedro and Antonio Atalig.

Pedro Atalig, a former CNMI
See BROWN on Page 12



Brown



HE AIN'T HEAVY, HE'S MY DUMMY

AGNES E. DONATO

Clad in full firefighting gear, firefighter Alex Aldan pull a 180-lb dummy as part of an aircraft rescue and firefighting training at the ARFF facility at Saipan International Airport on Thursday. The training was attended by CNMI and Palau firefighters, along with some media members.

Shell lowers prices anew

Shell has again lowered fuel prices by 5 cents a gallon, effective midnight last night.

This is the second time that Shell lowered its prices this year. The first time was on Nov. 20.

Shell Marianas president Phil Stalker said the company decided to implement the

move due to the easing of the worldwide price of oil, and more importantly a lowering of the cost of refined product.

"As we have repeatedly committed, as the price of product is reduced, we will pass on savings to our customers," he said in a statement.



Local

Federal aid program draws minimal applicants

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

A federal unemployment aid program drew little interest among resident workers, at-

tracting only 146 applicants during the one-month registration period. The number of applicants is barely one third of the over 500 workers that the Department of

Labor had expected to avail of benefits under the Disaster Unemployment Assistance program, which is distributed to workers who lost or missed work because of Supertyphoon Chaba.

Employment Services and Training director Alfred Pangelinan, who is running the program in the CNMI, said 86 or over half of the applications came from Rota, 56 from Saipan, and seven from Tinian.

Retailers comprise 86 of the total applicants, with 45 of them coming from Saipan and 41 from Rota. The other 36 applicants are farmers while the remaining 24 are fishermen.

Pangelinan expressed regret that only a few farmers and fishermen applied for the assistance, considering that most of them were not able to work for some time after Chaba hit the islands in August this year.

Nevertheless, he admitted that a number of those who did apply were turned down because they did not have the necessary documents such business license and records of income tax payment.

“That’s one lesson we learned from this program. Farmers and fishermen should report every

single income they make because tax records are one of the most common requirements for disaster relief,” he said.

Pangelinan reported only a portion of the Saipan applications have been reviewed so far. Nineteen have been deemed eligible for the assistance and 21 have been disapproved. All the other files, including those from Tinian and Rota, are still awaiting evaluation.

Pangelinan said he hopes to get all the applications assessed by next Friday.

He also said most of the successful applicants are retailers who were not able to open their store after the typhoon because of leaking roofs or damaged computers, among other reasons.

Approved applicants stand to receive between \$262 and about \$3,000, Pangelinan said. Eligible workers could get up to 26 weeks worth of earnings, but they could not receive more than \$262 per week.

At least one denied applicant from Saipan has appealed the decision of the Division of Employment Services and Training, Pangelinan said.

Labor Secretary Joaquin Tenorio is currently reviewing the appeal. If Tenorio affirms DEST’s decision, the appellant has the option pursue his appeal with the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration in San Francisco.

The CNMI Labor Department accepted applications for the assistance from Nov. 1 to 30.


However, Pangelinan said interested individuals may continue to turn in applications until Feb. 26 as long as they can come up with a valid reason why they missed the Nov. 30 deadline.

He said one local worker submitted an application a day after the deadline, but his request was declined because he failed to provide a convincing reason. “He just said he was too busy at work,” Pangelinan said.

TRUONGS

DIABETES
+GREEN

UNO SHOP



The Saipan Tribune accepts contributed photos of holidays, weddings, baptisms, and other community and family events for free publication. Material submitted should be original and not copyrighted, in digital or print format. Must include a caption containing complete details (a description of the event, location of the persons in the picture, the date, and the place), the name of the contributor, and a contact number. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to edit the caption, the date of publication and the size of the picture. Contributors can e-mail their submissions to editor@saipantribune.com. To check if contributions are received, call 223-6287, 223-3448, or 223-8743.

PHI

CB CRUZ

CARS UNLIMITED

CAMACHO

HARDT EYE

MCDO

COMMUNITY

Briefs

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 7, 2004									
DEPARTURES					ARRIVALS				
Saipan-Saipan					Saipan-Saipan				
CO 800	8:00am	8:30am	1,3		CO 801	7:00pm	7:30pm	1,3,4,5,7	
CO 802	8:30am	8:45am	4,7		CO 801	7:30pm	8:45pm	2	
CO 810	8:00am	8:10am	2,6		CO 800	8:00am	8:00am	1,4,5,7	
CO 812	8:20am	8:30am	1,3,4,5,6,7		CO 808	8:30am	11:45am	Daily	
CO 818	8:30am	1:00pm	8		CO 809	8:40pm	1:30pm	1,5,7	
CO 804	10:00pm	11:00pm	1,4,7		CO 804	3:30pm	4:00pm	Daily	
CO 808	8:00am	8:00pm	Daily		CO 808	4:00pm	8:00pm	1,5	
CO 818	8:30pm	8:00pm	1,3,4,5,6,7		CO 803	4:00pm	8:00pm	3,6	
CO 808	8:30pm	8:30pm	Daily		CO 804	4:30pm	8:30pm	2,4,7	
CO 808	8:30pm	8:40pm	1,3,4,5,7		CO 806	7:30pm	8:00pm	Daily	
MF 3006	7:40pm	8:00pm	Daily+Sa		MF 3002	8:40pm	10:00pm	Daily	
MF 3028	8:30pm	8:00pm	Daily+Sa		MF 3029	8:00pm	7:30pm	Daily+Sa	
Saipan-Manila					Manila-Saipan				
CO 809	8:30pm	8:30pm	1,4,7		CO 800	10:40pm	4:35A+1	2,4,7	
Saipan-Magapan					Magapan-Saipan				
MF 076	8:00am	11:00am	Daily		MF 077	8:30pm	1:00pm+	Daily	
Saipan-Shanghai					Shanghai-Saipan				
MF 608	8:00pm	7:00pm	3,6		MF 607	8:00pm	2:30pm+1	2,6	
Saipan-Oranjestad					Oranjestad-Saipan				
CO 800	8:30am	8:45pm	2,6		CO 802	8:00pm	2:10A+1	1,5	
Saipan-Taipei					Taipei-Saipan				
MF 076	8:30am	1:30pm	Daily		JAL 847	8am	2:30pm	Daily	
JAL 848	2:00pm	8:30pm	Daily		MF 076	10:30am	3:00pm	Daily	
MF 076	8:30pm	7:30pm	Daily		MF 077	8:45pm	0:45A+1	Daily	
Saipan-Cebu					Cebu-Saipan				
JAL 840	8:00am	8:00am	Daily		JAL 846	10:00pm	2:55A+1	Daily	
Saipan-Singapore					Singapore-Saipan				
CO 804	8:40am	8:30am	Daily		CO 802	8:30pm	1:40am+1	Daily	
Saipan-Hong Kong					Hong Kong-Saipan				
CO 808	8:30pm	8:30pm	1,5		CO 810	10:00pm	4:45A+1	1,5	
Saipan-Rota					Rota-Saipan				
MF 3006	7:40pm	8:30pm	Daily		MF 3000	8:30pm	8:30pm	Daily	
CO 808	8:30am	8:45am	Daily		CO 802	8:15am	8:45am	Daily	
MF 3007	10:00am	10:00am	Daily		MF 3003	1:00pm	2:00pm	Daily	
CO 808	2:00pm	2:30pm	Daily		CO 804	8:00pm	7:30pm	Daily	
MF 3029	8:30pm	8:45pm	Daily		MF 3006	7:00pm	7:30pm	Daily	
Saipan-Taipei					Taipei-Saipan				
CO 801	8:30pm	8:00am	3,6		CO 802	10:30pm	4:10am+1	3,6	
Saipan-Tinian					Tinian-Saipan				
ZJ 104	8:40pm	8:40pm	Daily		ZJ 102	7:00pm	7:00pm	Daily	
ZJ 104	7:00am	7:00am	Daily		ZJ 104	7:30am	8am	Daily	
ZJ 106	8am	8:00pm	Daily		ZJ 106	8:20am	8:00pm	Daily	
ZJ 107	8:40am	8:30am	Daily		ZJ 108	8am	8:10am	Daily	
ZJ 108	8:30am	8:30am	Daily		ZJ 109	10am	10:10am	Daily	
ZJ 111	10:45pm	10:00pm	Daily		ZJ 102	7:00pm	7:00pm	Daily	
ZJ 111	11:00am	11:00am	Daily		ZJ 104	7pm	12:10pm	Daily	
ZJ 115	1pm	1:00pm	Daily		ZJ 109	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily	
ZJ 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily		ZJ 108	2:30pm	3pm	Daily	
ZJ 118	4pm	4:00pm	Daily		ZJ 103	4:30pm	4:30pm	Daily	
MF 3026	8:30pm	8:45pm	5 & 7		ZJ 102	8pm	8:10pm	Daily	
ZJ 121	8:40pm	8:00pm	Daily		ZJ 104	8:00pm	8:10pm	Daily	
ZJ 123	8:40pm	8:00pm	Daily		ZJ 120	8:20pm	8:00pm	Daily	
ZJ 124	8pm	8:00pm	Daily		MF 3004	7:40pm	7:30pm	5 & 8	
MF 3007	8pm	8:00pm	New FL 8						
Rota-Saipan					Saipan-Rota				
MF 3006	8:30am	10:00am	Daily		CO 810	8:25am	7:00am	2,6	
CO 808	10:00am	10:40am			CO 848	8:25am	7:00am	1,2,4,7	
MF 3021	10:30pm	1:00pm	Daily		MF 3006	7:00am	8:10am	1,3,4,7	
CO 800	2:00 pm	3:00 pm			MF 3000	7:00pm	8:10pm	2,6	
MF 3028	8pm	8:00pm	Daily		MF 3003	8:00am	8:30am	Daily	
MF 3009	7:00pm	8:00pm	5		CO 808	8:15am	8:00pm		
CO 808	7:10 pm	7:30 pm			MF 3000	10:00am	10:30am	Daily	
MF 3007	8:00pm	8:00pm	8		CO 804	8:40pm	8:10pm	Daily	
					MF 3003	8:40pm	8:10pm	Daily	
					CO 800	8:00pm	8:40pm		
Tinian-Saipan					Saipan-Tinian				
MF 3026	8pm	8:40pm	5 & 7		MF 3004	8:30pm	8:10pm	1 stop in 6PM 8	
MF 3007	8:00pm	8:00pm	8						
Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental Airline; MF: Northwest Airline; JAL: Japan Airline; CZ: Air China; FM and ZJ: Pacific Island Airlines; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.									

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE							
Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Saipan-Saipan							
FRE 100	7:30am	8:00am	Daily	FRE 118	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 100	8:30am	8:50am	Daily	FRE 116	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
Saipan-Saipan							
FRE 200	10:00am	10:20am	Daily	FRE 117	3:30pm	3:40pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 200	10:40am	11:00am	Daily	FRE 118	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
Saipan-Saipan							
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily	FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 300	4:30pm	5:20pm	Daily	FRE 120	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
Saipan-Saipan							
FRE 400	8:00pm	8:30pm	Daily	FRE 125	8:00pm	8:10pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 400	8:40pm	7:10pm	Daily	Tinian-Saipan w/connections			
Saipan-Tinian							
FRE 101	8:40am	8:50am	Daily	Flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily	FRE 103	7:00am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily	FRE 104	7:30am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily	FRE 100**	8:30am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108*	8:10am	8:20am	Daily	FRE 100**	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:40am	10:50am	Daily	FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
				FRE 111	11:00am	11:10am	Daily
				FRE 114	11:00pm	11:10pm	Daily
				FRE 110	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
				FRE 118	3:30pm	3:40pm	Daily
				FRE 120*	4:30pm	4:30pm	Daily
				FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
				FRE 124	5:40pm	5:45pm	Daily
				FRE 120	8:30pm	8:30pm	Daily

WEATHER FORECAST

PICTURE TIME: 1:00 AM., DECEMBER 9, 2004
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A near-equatorial trough extends eastward from 4n130e to a weak circulation southwest of Chuuk near 5n147e to another weak circulation near 7n155e to 7n162e to a third weak circulation near 4n173e to 3n180. Scattered showers are occurring southwest of Palau near the western portion of the trough...between the equator and 3n from 130e to 134e. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with the circulation southwest of Chuuk are found between the equator and 6n from 144e to 150e and south of Kosrae between the equator and 6n from 160e to 170e. A weak upper-level low is centered northwest of Wake Island near 22n160e. Isolated thunderstorms are occurring between 19n and 24n from 159e to 161e. A surface trough of low pressure extends along 166e from 20n to 10n.trade-wind convergence east of the trough is producing scattered showers over Wake Island and northern portions of the Marshall Islands between 10n and 22n from 164e to 168e. Convergent flow into the weak circulation near 4n173e is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms across Majuro and southwestern portions of the Marshall Islands between 3n and 11n from 170e to 180.

SAIPAN AND TINIAN
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 10-15 mph.
Temperature: Highs around 86. Lows around 75.

GUAM AND ROTA
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 10-15 mph.
Temperature: Highs around 86. Lows around 75.

PALAU
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 10-15 kt.

POHNPEI
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: Variable at 5-10 kt.

YAP AND ULITHI
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 10 kt.

KOSRAE
Cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.
Winds: North at 10 kt.

CHUUK
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: Variable at 5-10 kt.

MAJURO
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.
Windss: Southeast at 15-20 kt

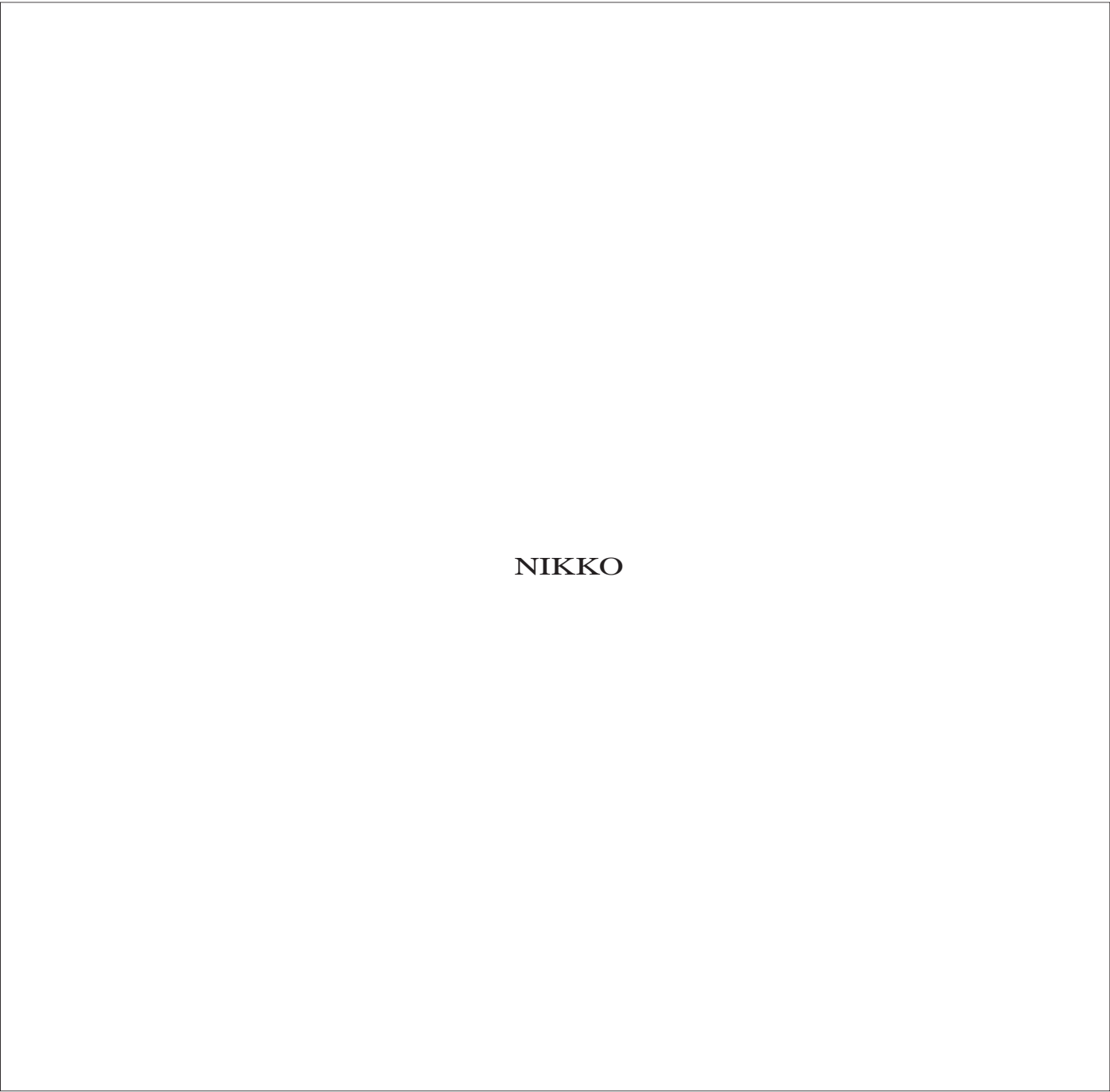
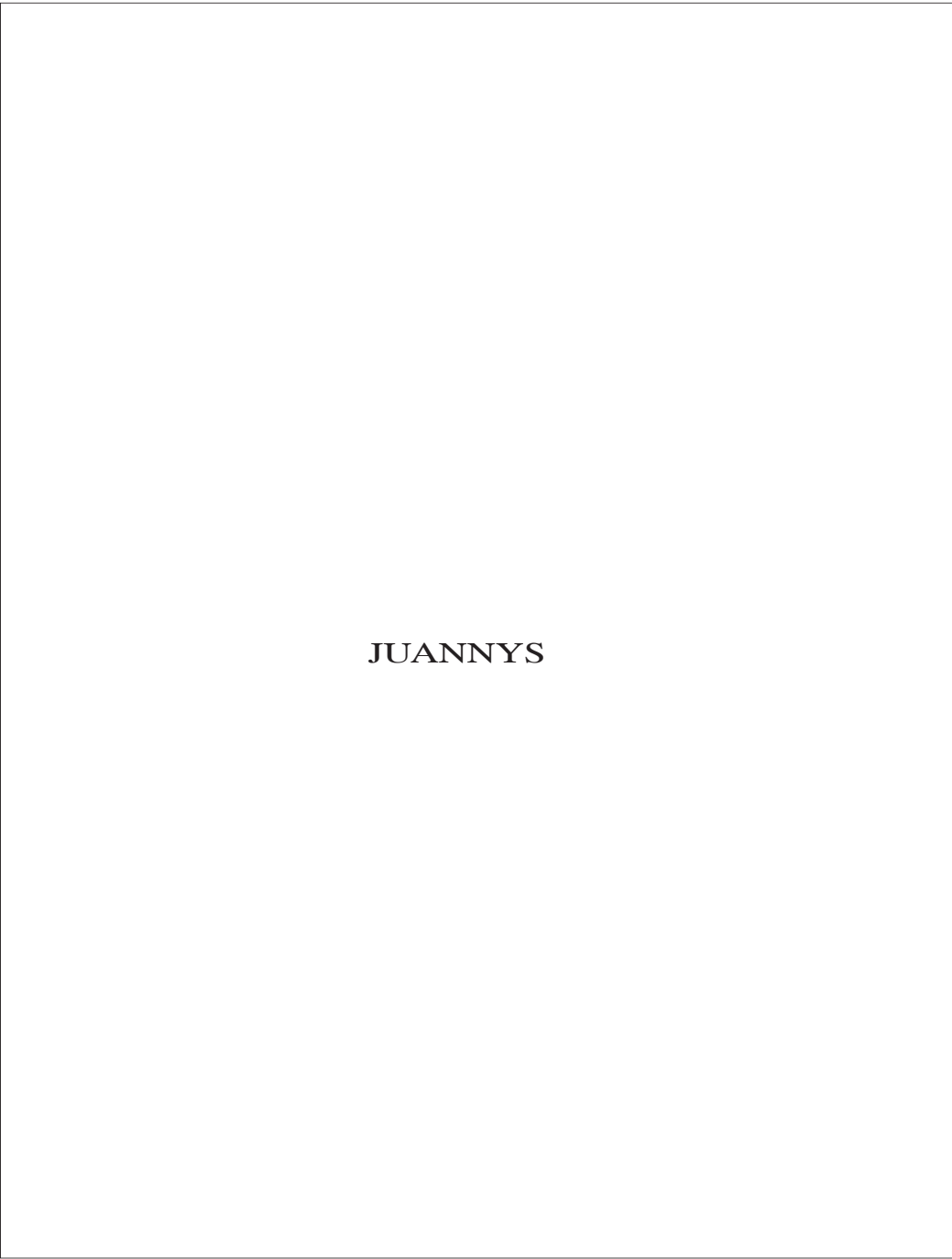
CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	62 F (17 C)	48 F (9 C)
Beijing	Sunny	53 F (12 C)	26 F (-3 C)
Hong Kong	Sunny	73 F (23 C)	61 F (16 C)
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	80 F (27 C)	65 F (18 C)
London, England	Partly Cloudy	54 F (12 C)	45 F (7 C)
Los Angeles	Sunny	79 F (26 C)	54 F (12 C)
Manila	Cloudy	86 F (30 C)	71 F (22 C)
Melbourne	Thunder	79 F (26 C)	65 F (18 C)
Miami	Partly Cloudy	85 F (29 C)	62 F (17 C)
New York City	Rain	46 F (8 C)	44 F (7 C)
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	54 F (12 C)	39 F (4 C)
Paris	Partly Cloudy	49 F (9 C)	41 F (5 C)
Pusan	Sunny	59 F (15 C)	43 F (6 C)
Rome	Rain	56 F (13 C)	44 F (7 C)
Salem, Oregon	Showers	58 F (14 C)	46 F (8 C)
San Francisco	Sunny	60 F (16 C)	50 F (10 C)
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	51 F (11 C)	34 F (1 C)
Tokyo, Japan	Partly Cloudy	53 F (12 C)	32 F (0 C)
Washington, DC	Rain	55 F (13 C)	43 F (6 C)

BOX OFFICE VIDEO

WOMENS CLINIC

ACE HARDWARE

ISLA FINANCIAL
+GREEN



DPS chief appoints new dep’t officials

Newly-appointed Department of Public Safety commissioner Santiago Tudela recently appointed new officials within the department, according to DPS spokesman Eric F. David.

David disclosed yesterday that Tudela’s previous position as deputy commissioner for operations would be filled by Maj. Juan Salas, who has been with the department for the past 19 years.

In an interview, Salas, who was previously chief of Office of Grants and Special Programs, said that, like the commissioner, his primary focus is on the morale issue within the department as well as continuing the investigations on alleged misconduct by its personnel.

“Those are among our biggest concerns,” he said. We’re going to clean house and let go of all the bad seeds in the department.”

Salas also extended appreciation to Gov. Juan N. Babauta, who recently lifted the austerity measures for the department.

“It’s a plus and a good sign,” he said. “We’re going to bring up the morale...we’re not blaming anybody, but we’re just going to put more attention on morale issues. When we promote people, we want them to have the salary they deserve.”

David also indicated that Assistant Chief for Fire Francis Taimanao now serves as chief of OGSP, while Police is under the direction of Chief Bertha Tudela.

Tudela held the position a few years back before former commissioner Edward Camacho assigned her to a special intelligence program. The most recent chief of police was Antonio Ayuyu, who is now back at the Division of Corrections.

David said Deputy Commissioner for Administration Franklin Babauta, who is currently training in Fort Bliss, Texas before deployment to Iraq, still holds his position with the department.

He said Tudela, Taimanao, and Salas were appointed on Nov. 23.

Tudela and Taimanao were contacted for comment but were not available as of press time. *(Shan Seman)*

Man wanted for alleged domestic abuse

By SHAN SEMAN
REPORTER

Authorities are now on the lookout for a 21-year-old man allegedly involved in a domestic incident.

According to Department of Public Safety public information officer PO2 Eric F. David, the Criminal Investigation Bureau is asking for the community’s help in locating the suspect, Daniel Howell Dela Cruz.

An arrest warrant was issued for the suspect, signed by Superior Court Judge Juan S. Lizama on Nov. 29. Authorities are also to confiscate all travel documents to prevent Dela Cruz from leaving the island. Dela Cruz is also restricted from making any form of contact with the victim, whose name was withheld due to the incident being a domestic case.

Dela Cruz is described as 5’8” tall, with brown eyes and brown hair.

Police report indicated that Dela Cruz allegedly assaulted his girlfriend after a heated argument when he tried to take their baby from Room 3 of the Agbanlog barracks in San Vicente. The victim said no, resulting in the argument getting worse.

Dela Cruz reportedly grabbed the baby from the victim’s arms and proceeded to walk out when the victim tried to stop him.

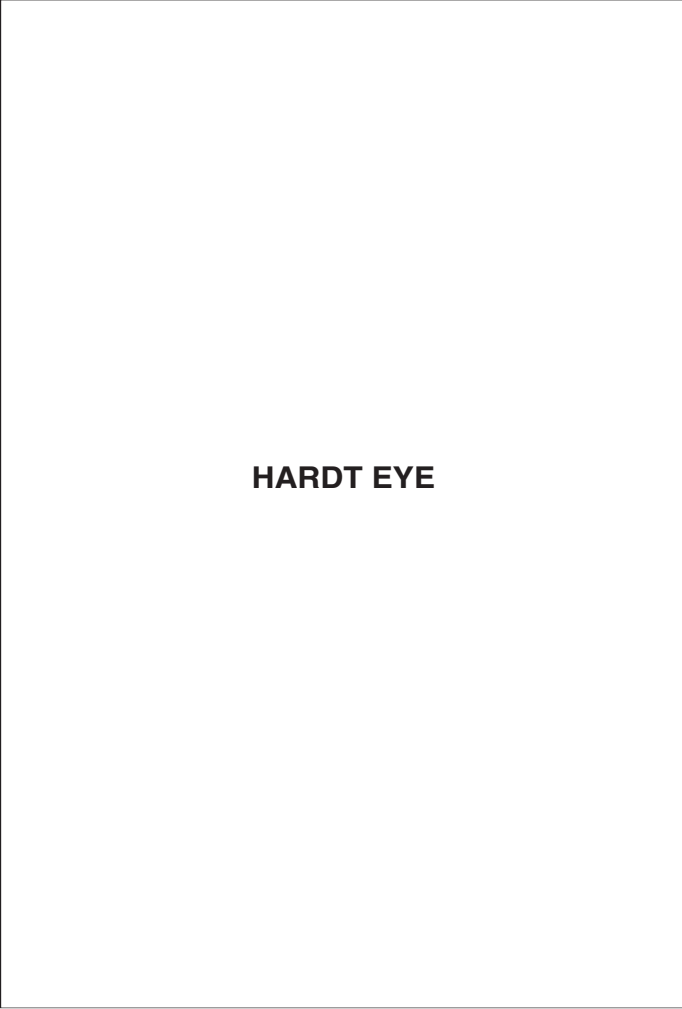
Dela Cruz allegedly pushed the victim on her right shoulder. The victim claims that she was pushed hard, putting her off balance and making her stumble toward the wall.

“According to [victim], the [suspect] followed her to the wall and tried to punch her.”

The victim reportedly slapped the victim, causing him to get mad and push her against the wall.

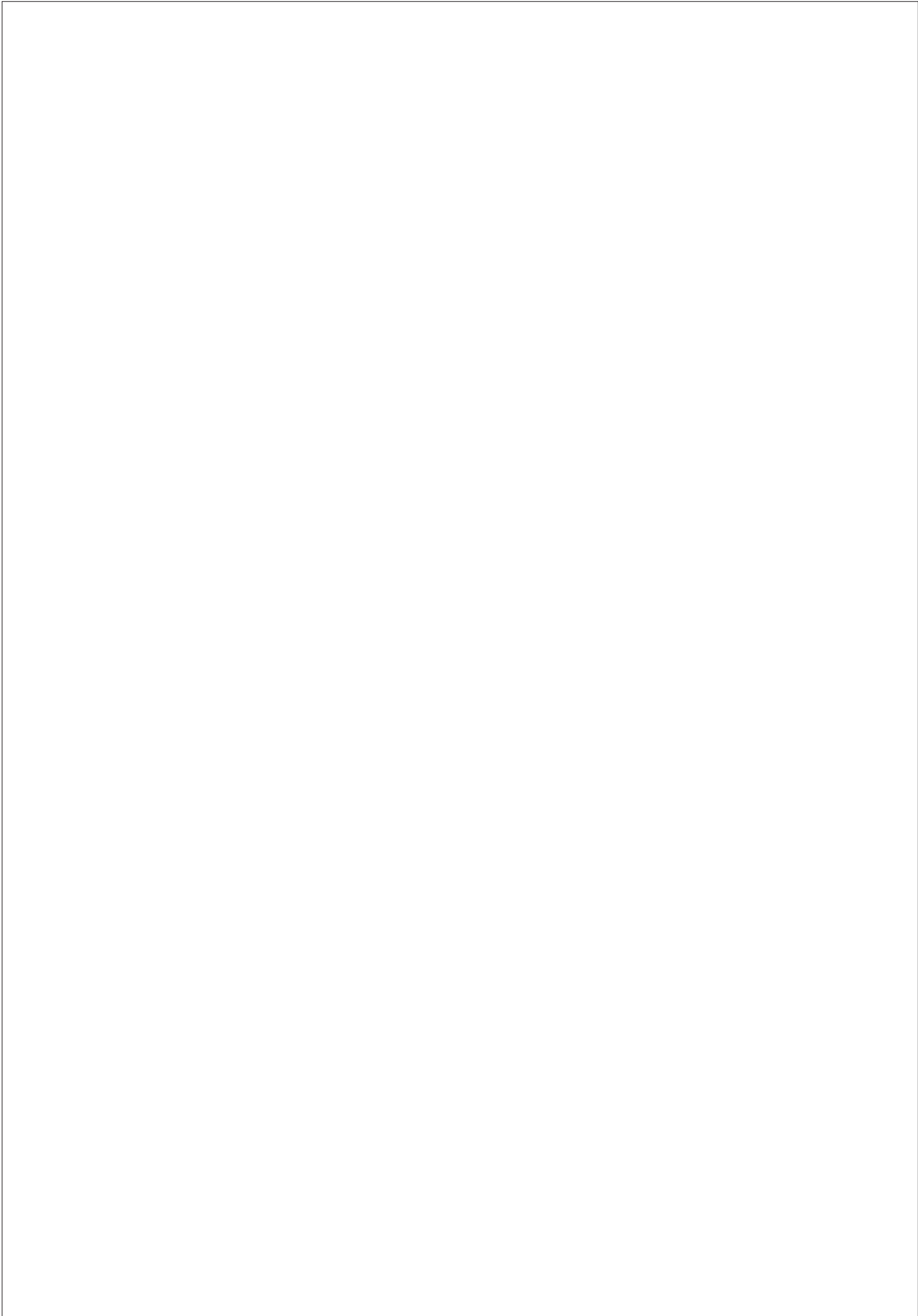
The suspect allegedly pushed her a third time and reportedly punched her on the back of her neck twice before walking out with the baby.

A responding officer, who reached the scene at about 10:



JOLLIBEE
CMYK

SAIPAN ICE



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Opinion

Saipan Tribune

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The price gouging stupor

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Letters to the Editor

Azmar’s worst nightmare

Guerreros, Tenorios block sale of Hafa Adai property

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

The Guerrero and Tenorio shareholders of Saipan Hotel Corp. filed a lawsuit yesterday to prevent any action that will divest the CNMI company of its ownership of the Hafa Adai Hotel property.

They accused the majority shareholders of the company of proposing a reorganization that would dilute their shares, which would result in decreased value and diminished control over the company. SHC has scheduled to vote on the plan today.

Businessman Juan T. Guerrero, Jesus T. Guerrero, Carmen Guerrero Borja, Guerrero Family Trust, Jose C. Tenorio Trust, AJT Trust, and the estate of Santiago C. Tenorio filed the

civil action before the Superior Court, asking for the award of unspecified amount of damages.

The defendants in the suit include SHC, Kinki Nippon Trust, Ltd., Pacific Development, Inc., and Pedro J.L. Igitol, the secretary of SHC.

SHC, a CNMI corporation formed in 1967 by CNMI residents, does business as the Hafa Adai Hotel. SHC is a subsidiary of PDI, which owns 79 percent of SHC's common, voting stock. The plaintiffs own the remaining 21 percent as minority shareholders. KNT, meanwhile, owns 100 percent of SHC's preferred, non-voting stock, and manages the hotel.

KNT also owns 60 percent of the voting stock of PDI, the largest asset of which is the SHC stock. The minor-

ity shareholders own the remaining 40 percent of PDI.

"KNT had financial control over both PDI and SHC. Exploiting this control and constructive ownership of these two CNMI corporations, KNT over-encumbered the hotel and the minority shareholders' holdings through a series of loans with no direct security other than guaranties by KNT. KNT also manipulated the accounts and management of the hotel for the sole purpose of financially sustaining itself," the plaintiffs' lawyer, Rodney J. Jacob, stated in a complaint.

The minority shareholders assailed the company reorganization that would dilute their shares with SHC. Jacob said the reorganization was proposed in a special board meeting last Dec. 4.

RATS

From Page 1

put into growing. Many of these crops are ready for the market, and income is reduced [by] up to 50 percent."

A total of 26 farmers signed a petition that was to be forwarded to Department of Lands and Natural Resources Secretary Richard Seman yesterday. Seman was unavailable for comment.

"Not only is the rat presence at the KCFP contributing to substantial damage to our crops, [but] it also poses a health threat to the Kagman community. KCFP is becoming, if not already, a premier breeding ground for rats, which requires your immediate assistance and attention," a part of the petition reads.

Agriculturalist Ben Borja of the Division of Agriculture said a meeting that will include farmers will be organized to address the issue.

In the meantime, Borja, who also is a farmer, said keeping farms and its surrounding areas properly sanitized would aid in minimizing the problem, as well as people refraining from illegal dumping of trash around the Kagman area.

"There are some plots that are not clean," he said. "With the weather and also since there are more trash thrown

around in different places, it creates a better breeding place for [rats]. People dump trash in places they're not supposed to, and the rats come and eat and breed."

Borja explained that there are other ways of dealing with the rats, including using poison and rat traps. He, however, said chemical use should be the last resort as it may cause a chain reaction that would, in turn, affect other animals as well as the surrounding community. Both Cabrera and Borja agreed that chemicals are too expensive.

"We need to be very careful in using chemicals," Borja said. "It may cause a chain reaction where the rat eats the poison, looks for water to drink, and transfer the chemical to the water, affecting other animals drinking from those water containers."

"I've tried [using poison] and lost about 3 to 4 piglets in my farm," he said. "Once they [ingest] poison, their blood coagulates. They then immediately look for water, and once they drink the water, they die. When they die in a water container, what's next?"

Borja also cited the need to remember that "Kagman is a big community and we don't want rats running to their place after taking the poison."

Borja said addressing the problem should involve a collaborative effort

between the Agriculture Division, Department of Public Health, as well as schools.

"Kids should be made aware of this problem, because it is a problem, and with everybody chipping in and doing their part...I'm pretty sure we can minimize this," he said.

He said problems with rats infesting farm areas in Kagman is not new and is also being experienced in other plots, including San Roque and Agingan Point areas, among others.

Cabrera, also an agricultural consultant for the Northern Marianas College-Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Service, said 2004 was a tough year for farmers, noting the damage sustained from typhoons Tingting and Chaba, and now rats.

"Everyone is suffering," he said. "Farmers are spending a lot on recovery and it's good now that we're producing, but with the rats coming in, farms are hard hit, and even the village area. There are rats all over the place."

He said the group is lobbying the Legislature to appropriate funds for a program that would assist farmers in dealing with the issue.

"It's been a top priority for the past several weeks," he said. "We're working with DLNR and NMC-CREES."

the governor that the Senate rejected his nomination of Brown.

On Nov. 17, 2003, however, five senators convened on Rota to regain the Senate leadership. The four minority senators who had taken over the leadership were absent. In that session, the five senators unanimously voted in favor of Brown's confirmation.

Atalig also cited Brown's own legal opinion when she was Senate legal counsel in 1992. She said in that opinion that an appointee whose nomination for confirmation was rejected by the Senate could not be re-nominated for the position.

Atalig disclosed his intention to file a lawsuit against Brown to unseat her right after last Monday's court hearing on the lawsuit filed by the AGO to prevent the drawdown of some \$3.45 million in land compensation fund for the claim of the Malite estate.

In an interview with Atalig after last Monday's hearing, he said Brown "has no business bringing this lawsuit," adding that the attorney general went on with the suit despite the governor's consent to release the land compensation being requested by the Malite estate.

"The AGO is doing things [the way] it wants," Atalig said. He noted that he has legal experience regarding the removal of an attorney general, citing the lawsuit against former attorney general Maya Kara.

"The proposed scheme included the reorganization of KNT's non-voting stock into voting stock in SHC, and the issuance of an additional 250,000 common, voting shares in SHC," the lawyer said. SHC also proposed a change in the composition of the board of directors from seven to "not less than three and not more than 15 directors."

The minority shareholders would have agreed to reorganization had KNT agreed with their proposal to provide agreeable consideration. KNT refused the plaintiffs' condition.

"Following the SHC special board of directors meeting, the scheme was designed to divest the minority shareholders of their interest in the hotel so that it could be sold to a third party despite previous representations to the contrary," Jacob said, adding that KNT's corporate reorganization involved the sale of two other Japan hotels.

Jacob also said the defendants failed

to fully disclose to his clients documents and information regarding the proposed reorganization in SHC stock ownership.

Last Wednesday, the minority shareholders sent a letter to SHC so that they could determine whether or not the dilution of their shares that was proposed to be voted on at the annual shareholders' meeting scheduled today would violate Article XII of the CNMI Constitution, which provides for alienation of land from those who are not of Northern Marianas descent.

"Because of the conduct of KNT, SHC, and PDI...all defendants should be enjoined from taking any action that will divest SHC of its existing ownership interest, if any, of the property under Article XII of the CNMI Constitution," the lawyer said, asking the court for a temporary restraining order and injunction, and for a jury trial.

FINANCE

From Page 1

out based on emergency needs, the government follows the normal procedure for its release.

The normal process, he said, means releasing the checks as soon as the submitted tax documentations are certified as complete, and granted that public funds are available. Thus the release of rebates or refunds does not depend on how early the taxpayer files tax documents.

"It doesn't guarantee that an early submission results in early release because of some document [problems]. For instance, some forget to include winnings for poker and lottery. So that delays the processing," said Atalig.

In consideration of some people's situation, he said the administration has adopted a system to prioritize the release of rebates for individuals facing urgent needs.

To qualify, individuals should make a formal letter to the government, through the Office of Lt. Gov. Diego T. Benavente, justifying that the case is emergency in nature. Usual "emergency cases" include medical treatment, school and housing-related payments, funeral, and the like.

Atalig said the release of rebates is

done by batches. Beginning August this year, at least five batches have been paid out, amounting to some \$5 million. Another batch will be released before Christmas.

He said rebates or refunds are paid out from the government's general fund. This includes some of the cover-over tax collected by the local government from the federal government. Cover-over tax refers to the claimed overdue rebate of federal taxes, duties, and fees collected from the CNMI residents since the mid-70s.

The administration said that it has received \$2 million worth of such refunds. This amount was used to pay mainly the minimum wage earners or those whose rebates are below \$500 or within that vicinity.

Meantime, Atalig said that any funds that get into the Treasury are treated as general funds. "We are accessing the general fund to pay out rebates. And we're now down to \$15 million," he said.

The remaining debt would be paid out by June 2005.

In previous years, authorities said that rebates or refunds were given out in summer.

The Babauta administration said that when it assumed office in 2002, the Rebate Trust Account was empty.

BROWN

From Page 1

Supreme Court justice, represented Demapan in the taxpayer's lawsuit. The former Senate president is brother to CNMI Supreme Court Chief Justice Miguel S. Demapan.

In a verified complaint, Atalig asserted that Brown's appointment as attorney general was not duly confirmed by the Senate—a constitutional requirement for appointment in that position.

"Plaintiff [Demapan] now asks, how long should this court, and how long should the citizens of this great Commonwealth tolerate this blatant and reckless conduct by the Office of the Attorney General to ignore and violate our NMI Constitution and Commonwealth laws for which we swore and pledged to uphold and defend. How long? How long? How long?" Atalig asked.

Atalig impleaded Brown in her personal capacity and the CNMI government as defendants in the lawsuit. He asked the court to permanently bar the CNMI government from paying Brown the salary and expenses of an attorney general, whether in official or acting capacities. He also asked the court to compel repayment of funds received by Brown from the government in the form of salary and expenses as attorney general.

Atalig explained that Brown failed to

muster the constitutional requirement for confirmation within the 90-day deadline following her appointment by Gov. Juan N. Babauta on June 16, 2003. The lawyer said the 90-day deadline fell on Sept. 14, 2003, when no Senate session was held.

"Thus, the Senate did not confirm Pamela S. Brown as attorney general on Sept. 14, 2003. Plaintiff contends that as soon as the 90-day Senate confirmation [deadline] expired, Pamela S. Brown's nomination as attorney general was rejected and she could not be re-nominated," Atalig said.

Atalig cited 1 CMC §2904, which states: "If the appointment is not confirmed by the Senate...within 90 days from the date the person was temporarily appointed, the appointment shall automatically terminate, the position shall become vacant and the person nominated shall not be re-nominated."

On Sept. 17, 2003, the Senate explicitly rejected Brown's nomination, according to Atalig. The Senate action transpired when the then minority bloc led by Sen. Pete Reyes took control over the Upper House's leadership. The new leadership called for a session and with four senators present, three of them voted to reject Brown's confirmation. One lawmaker abstained from voting.

On the same day, Reyes, who took over the post of Senate president, wrote a letter to Babauta to inform

NMC

From Page 1

rently under warning status. Any positive information regarding the financial standing of the college, particularly with regard to the La Fiesta shopping complex, is vital to NMC getting off warning status.

"Our accreditation liaison officers are in communication with the WASC visiting team. Hopefully, we can get something to them this week or the next. We hope it's not too late," King-Hinds said.

She also reported that the college received information that the Attorney General's Office is done reviewing legal issues surrounding the MOA. "So it's just a matter of sitting down and actually signing it. But right now, that hasn't happened yet," she said.

The college was placed this year on warning status by WASC's two accrediting commissions—for Junior and Community Colleges and for Senior Colleges and Universities—due to its inability to correct finance-related problems and failure to comply with

certain accreditation standards.

WASC's Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges placed NMC on warning status last January and retained the same status despite NMC's submission of needed reports last June. It expressed concern over NMC's purchase of the La Fiesta complex, citing the college's lack of resources to maintain two campuses.

Early in July this year, WASC's Senior College Commission issued a warning to NMC for non-compliance with standards, as had been cited by ACCJC. The senior commission's warning has put the college's four-year elementary education program—its only baccalaureate program—at risk.

Last September, Gov. Juan N. Babauta and the NMC Board of Regents signed a memorandum of agreement transferring responsibility over La Fiesta to the CNMI Executive Branch. But the agreement could not be finalized right away because it needed the approval of the mall's original sellers.

Hotel Nikko Saipan and Coco's Lagoon Development Corp. gave their consent to the transfer last month.

Letters to the Editor

CUC

SHELL VISOR

Letters to the Editor

SHELL STAMP

Letters to the Editor

Let the records speak!

All public lands in the CNMI belong to the indigenous people. Also, it does not belong to the governor as an individual, the Senate or the House of Representative as collective groups, Cinta Kaipat, Pete Perez or PaganWatch.

MPLA is the only agency with the vested authority to negotiate for the indigenous people land leases and, for that matter, mining proposals and other appropriate land usages. As indigenous persons, it is our duty to seek, resolve, protect, and promote our interests in our own investments.

MPLA’s board members—Ana Demapan-Castro, Benita Manglona, Nick Nekai, Manny Pangelinan and Felix Sasamoto—are far from being irresponsible or derelict, as implied by Azmar’s Don Farrell. The board members stated many reasons as a matter of public record that they are not against development or anti-business but simply could not support Azmar’s proposal to mine Pagan

Foundation solicits help of Filipino community

Last year was a very successful time in our life as we celebrated the 26th year of the Filipino Community Foundation Inc.’s existence here on Saipan.

Our Simbang Gabi Committee extended its help in completing several Mount Carmel projects. This year there will be a lot of meaningful projects that our group is thinking of. Our objective and focus is to also extend our helping hand to our needy *kababayan* in the Philippines.

The nine-days novena committee had successfully achieved its goal, pledging an exact amount of \$4,000 that will be used to build a half portion of a school classroom building. We had chosen the Lalawigan Borogan Eastern Samar Elementary School as beneficiary. The committee had unanimously decided and agreed to completely donate one whole classroom building of the typical “Duplex Classroom Building.” This is being done in coordination with the office of “Classroom Galing Sa Mamamayan” and Federation of Pilipino Abroad (CGMA) project manager Elena L. Calingasan, who is in close coordination with the office of the Federation of Filipino Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Inc. (FFCCCII). Calingasan was assigned to execute and administer the construction project in the Philippines under its Tacloban, Leyte Region and the office of the Governor of Eastern Samar.

With respect to this, I am again appealing to all our *kababayan* here on Saipan for your support and generosity to continue and be with us for this noble project while celebrating the traditions of our Catholic faith. The funds that we will gather shall be more concentrated on the above project as we believe in the noble cause of helping improve the education of our youths back home. To ensure that this donation goes to its intended purpose, we will be working closely with the Philippine Consulate.

We are very thankful to our donors and also to Bishop Camacho who always gives us his blessings and support for the utilization of Mt. Carmel Cathedral as our venue for our *Simbang Gabi*.

This is also to request the reconfirmation of sponsorship with your respective coordinators. For further information, we are providing herewith the listings of names and contact numbers of each of the nine-day novena coordinators:

Date:	Coordinators:	Telephone/Fax:
Dec 16, 2004	United Filipino Organizations (UFO) & Philippine Consulate c/o Ms. Nelida Atalig/ Mr. Ed Reyes	322-0691 or 234-0484
Dec 17, 2004	Mr. Danny Domingo, Totoy Francisco & Joe Velarde	288-1657, 235-1068, 235-4808
Dec 18 2004	M/M Rommel & Raquel Mostales	234-3369 or 234-7937
Dec 19, 2004	M/M Vir/Alice Abueme	322-3366 or
	M/M Briggs Hernandez	322-6190
Dec 20, 2004	M/M Eddie/Helen Caranzo	234-8476
Dec 21, 2004	M/M Romy & Celia Pagapular & Couples for Christ c/o Charlene Pagapular	234-8569
Dec 22, 2004	M/M Rosel/Linda Torres	234-7732
	M/M Lito/Malou Mendoza	234-6735
Dec 23, 2004	Ms. Ella Vitug & family c/o Island Delight	234-1409 or 234-8382
Dec 24, 2004	Ms. Nnette Delos Santos & Bro. Rene Atienza	235-3949 or 235-5009

For those of you who wish to share and would like to be one of our sponsors for any of the given *Simbang Gabi* sponsorship dates written above, please call any of the coordinators listed above or kindly call the undersigned.

Eddie C. Caranzo
Overall chairman
Simbang Gabi Committee
234-8476 or 287-8476

because of Azmar’s continued and overwhelming failures time and time again to comply with necessary permit-related requirements. These requirements pertain to Azmar’s financial, personal, police and business history necessary for the board to review and make an informed and appropriate decision. Besides Azmar’s repeated failures to comply with MPLA’s requests for permitting purposes, Azmar took the liberty to delete and/or alter official MPLA requests for records, statement and documents including conditions. We have witnessed in the last MPLA board meeting the arrogance and irrational behavior demonstrated by Azmar. A person would have to be a complete moron or severely corrupted to agree to grant Azmar any type of permit. To the surprise of many present at the last MPLA meeting, including several board members, Azmar also failed to pay a regular permit fee for pozzolan research and development on Pagan—an R&D permit granted to Azmar last year. One wonders if Farrell and Arkle have not been paid yet for their hard work. According to Deputy Commissioner Frankie Eliptico, Azmar surrendered their R&D permit. The records show that Azmar attempted but failed to convince MPLA to alter or remove a particular clause in the R&D permit prohibiting Azmar from extracting pozzolan

and selling it. MPLA stood its ground and made it clear that it would be inappropriate to alter or remove that particular condition in the R&D permit. We commend MPLA’s management for looking after the people’s interests. Tons of pozzolan would have been removed and sold as samples under the auspices of research and development.

It is the duty of the indigenous people of the CNMI to beat the drums, come together and show resolve when there is clear and convincing evidence that our interests are being betrayed or compromised. We are weary of persons disguised as friends of the indigenous people, self-made scientists and education experts who insist on what is good for our future generations. We clearly discern that our foremost critics wear the “sheep skin” of culture and matrimonial ties as disguises for personal gains and enrichment at the expense of our children. We share our critics’ dream of “reclining at sunset on the black sands of Pagan” but not until you mend your ways and remove all injurious intents from your entrepreneurial practices.

Ray Mafnas
Matansa, Saipan

BABY NEWS



The Naked Fish displays her considerable wares

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Regular Beach Road passers would immediately notice the place. It's the newly re-furbished building done up in an eye-catching blend of mellow red, beige, and a patch of green—made more attractive by a neat asphalt-covered parking lot on the facade.

The place is strikingly named Naked Fish, the newest watering hole on the island, that is sure to bring a new feel for diners and bar-goers alike.

Ralph Yumul, a member of the well-known Yumul family that runs Jollibee, YCO Real Value, and Liberty Plaza, among others, serves as the Naked Fish Bar and Grill supervisor.

The big question, though, is, why Naked Fish? Certainly, you'd find a naked fish inside—there are at least two large fish heads and bones displayed as art form in the restaurant's corners.

But why the name? According to Ralph, a business executive in his early 30s, it has something to do with what customers can experience when they come to the place. It's about the promise of being satisfied and full.

"You'd finish your food with nothing left but the bones of the fish so to speak. You'd leave it naked," he said.

He said he and his family actu-



From left, Ralph and Joy Yumul; Marites Yumul, Rep. Ray Yumul's wife; Frances and Jesse Yumul; Laila Camacho, and Dante Yumul.

ally played on the idea from the Food Network's Naked Chef. The show features 20-something British sensation Jamie Oliver, who sports a passion for modern life and modern cooking. The chef strips down recipes to their bare essentials and cooks with maximum flavor and minimum effort.

Ralph, meantime, said that he and his younger brother,

congressman and Army reservist Ray Yumul, whose blown up group picture with fellow reservists currently on training for Iraq hangs on the wall, have long wished to open a bar that caters to their age group, "something that offers great food and has a friendly atmosphere."

Naked Fish aims to deliver that promise so that when people enter and stay, they would

feel comfortable and more energized, he said.

The place, he said, is intentionally designed to have a section for jamming, which has a more youthful and upbeat ambience, and a corner that exudes a more relaxed and calm mood.

Naked Fish formally opens tomorrow.

It is open during "happy
See THE NAKED on Page 20

Businesses and personal users snapping up mp domain names

SAIPAN, CNMI—Open registration for dotMP (<http://get.mp>) commenced on Dec. 1 and a wide spectrum of business and personal users from Europe, America and Asia have registered their .mp domain names and published mobile content on their dotMP sites.

"dotMP is all about the creation of unique online identities and publishing Web and mobile content. We expected a diverse group of users but not this much diversity this quickly," said Gib Bintliff, Saipan DataCom's President. "British Members of Parliament, Fortune 500 companies, Eddie 'Da Mullet' and everyone in between; they're all registering and putting content on their Mobile Sites."

Saipan DataCom describes dotMP as the Complete Mobile Content Platform.

dotMP CS (Commercial Site) provides businesses and marketers with their own .mp domain names and their own Mobile Sites and Management Interface for publishing mobile content.

dotMP PS (Personal Site) provides consumer users with

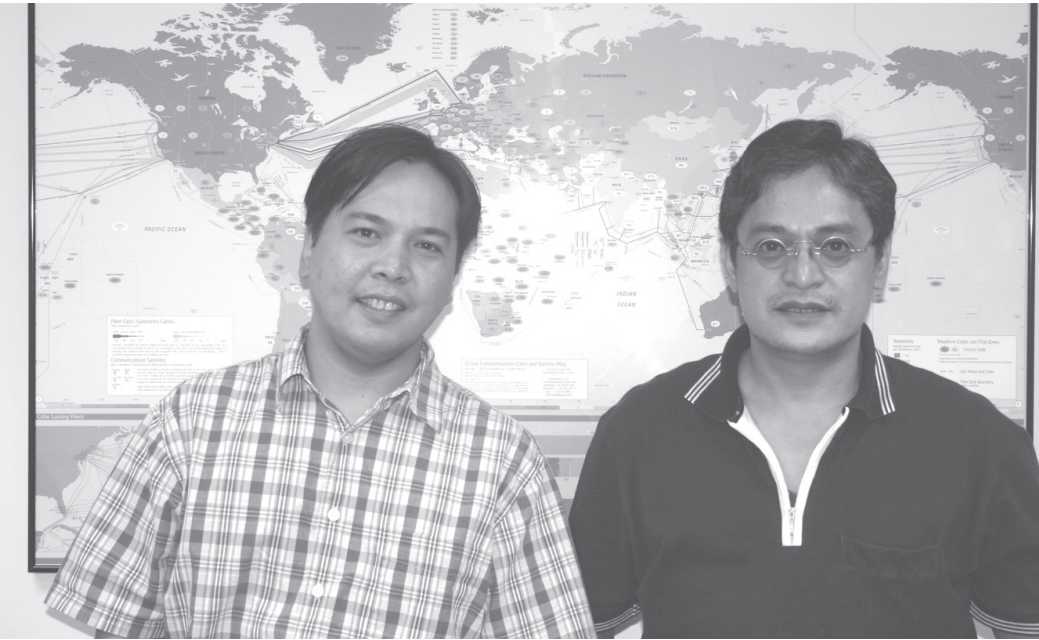
their own .mp domain name and their own Web site, Mobile Site, and Email. No programming is required. dotMP PS users can input and edit their content with computers and mobile phones. Email can be read and sent from mobile phones and camera phone users can upload photos directly to their sites.

"Now it's easy for anyone to have their own mobile domain name, Web site and Mobile Site," according to Rob Farrow, Saipan DataCom's Marketing Director. "dotMP let's people focus on self-expression, sharing thoughts and photos, making new friends and fun."

dotMP CS and PS sites are instantly generated at the conclusion of the domain name registration process and are immediately available for configuration and content input. dotMP sites display properly on mobile phones around the world. Users can easily equate .mp with mobile since "mp" stands for "mobile phone".

Eighty's throw-back and
See BUSINESSES on Page 20

SHELL VISOR



SHAN SEMAN
Franco O. Mendoza, Verizon Pacifica 's webmaster who developed the new website, left, and Jorge Soledad, who handles the prepaid phone cards at Verizon Pacifica.

Verizon prepaid cards now just a click away

In light of the increasing number of prepaid phone card users in the Northern Marianas, Guam, Philippines, Japan, and the USA, Verizon Pacifica is launching a new online service that would allow them to get their own calling cards without leaving their homes or their offices.

The Verizon Pacifica Virtual

Calling Card Service allows customers to securely buy all types of prepaid cards—Star 88 cellular and long distance phone cards—through the Internet, according to Franco O. Mendoza, the telecommunications company's webmaster who developed the new website.

Mendoza said that by

simply logging on to e-card.vzpacifica.net, customers can instantly buy and print out their virtual prepaid cards, which provide essential information such as the PIN code, the toll-free number, and the type of calling card purchased. "It's just like the prepaid cards

See **VERIZON** on Page 20

SAM ELECTRONICS

SHELL STAMP

China promises to sustain development

BEIJING (AP)—China’s leaders vowed Sunday to sustain steady economic development and control investment in fixed assets in 2005, state media said. President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao also reiterated their commitment to strengthening macroeconomic control measures at the close of a three-day conference attended by top-level policymakers, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

The report did not say if Beijing was any closer to letting the yuan—the Chinese currency—trade freely on world markets. The topic is of intense interest, especially in the United States, where some manufacturers contend that China’s currency controls undervalue the

yuan by as much as 40 percent, giving Chinese exporters an unfair price advantage. The government “will continue to put macroeconomic control on top of the agenda for next year’s plan in order to maintain a steady and comparatively fast economic development and basically stable prices,” Xinhua said. Other goals that were discussed during the closed-door meeting included controlling the overall scale of fixed-asset investment, increasing agricultural output to improve farmers’ incomes and speeding up economic restructuring, it said. It did not give details on how the goals would be achieved. Last week, leaders at another high-level Communist Party

meeting said they plan to extend restrictions on bank lending and discourage investment in fast-growing sectors such as real estate and steelmaking next year. They also promised to try to hold down inflation while keeping the booming economy growing at a stable rate, using what Hu called “prudent fiscal and monetary policies.” Raising farm incomes in China’s poverty-stricken coun-

tryside was identified as one of the top priorities. The government says it expects China’s economy to expand by 9 percent this year. The figure is well above the official target of 7 percent but Hu and other officials have publicly expressed confidence that they can keep that from triggering inflation that they worry might cause unrest and threaten China’s fragile banks.

BUSINESSES

From Page 18

cult icon Eddie Santos aka “Rock Da Mullet” registered mullet.mp. “dotMP lets fans get to my stuff on their mobiles and the Web using the same address (<http://mullet.mp>). It’s easy and a ton of people are hitting my site. Who doesn’t have a mobile these days?” Saipan DataCom, Inc. is a

VERIZON

From Page 19

you buy in a store,” he said. “We are consistently improving the quality of service we provide our customers and we want Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands to be at pace with the rest of the world in terms of technology by offering them a comprehensive e-commerce solution that streamlines the way they do business,” said Mendoza. Jorge Soledad, who handles the prepaid phone cards at Verizon Pacifica, assured customers that the virtual calling cards are as efficient as the ones available in various retail stores throughout the islands. “The only difference is you don’t actually have to go out to get one. It is so convenient and that is what we at Verizon have been consistently working on,” Soledad said. He noted that the new website also provides other information including the number of minutes available in a particular value of phone card when used to call various parts of the world and the United States. In addition, Mendoza said buying a prepaid calling card at the e-card.vzpacifica.net website is easy and secured, noting that Verizon Pacifica uses the latest 128-bit encryption technology to keep personal information safe.

THE NAKED

From Page 18

hour” which begins at 4pm to 11pm daily. “We want to cater to the happy hour group. It’s for those who want to relax after work,” he said. Eventually, he said, the place would offer lunch packages. Naked Fish brings to the table a wide selection of starters from sashimi, sizzling shrimp gambas, to fried mushroom and fried zucchini as well as mouth-watering pizzas—New York, Vegetarian, Southerwestern Chicken Pizza,

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands corporation. The company has been the administrator and registry for the .mp Internet top-level domain since 1996. Saipan DataCom, Inc. is actively involved with community service in the CNMI including its own initiatives to fight pediatric cancer and support information technology learning. (*PRNewswire*)

“All information—including name, address, and credit card number—is encrypted using a secure server for maximum security. Your credit card and billing information cannot be read as it travels to our system. We’re so certain that our online service is secure that we back it up with a guarantee.” Credit card transactions are handled by a third-party financial institution, which receives the credit card number and other personal identifying information only to verify the credit card numbers and process transactions, he added. Mendoza said that if the web browser is enabled for Secure Sockets Layer, the transaction and credit card payment information will be encrypted during transmission. The following browsers are compatible with Verizon Pacifica’s Online Service: Microsoft Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator version 3.05 and higher. He also cited some of the advantages of using the online Virtual Calling Card Service: (1) It is easy to confirm whether you have received the proper amount of credit for each transaction; (2) The system performs an Address Verification System, and eliminates the chance of using a stolen credit card, saving one from a charge back; and (3) Reduces authorization time to as low as five seconds per transaction.

and Chamorro Pizza. Main entrees include the delectable “Our Steak”, Sizzling Steak, Chicken Breasts, Sizzling Pork Chops, and Grilled Wahoo. Wines, and other beverages are also available. “We’re excited about our menu. We invite people to come and judge for themselves how good the food and the ambience is,” said Ralph. Naked Fish is located in the former Hongkong Restaurant, a few blocks from The 13 Fishermen Pavilion on Beach Road, Garapan.

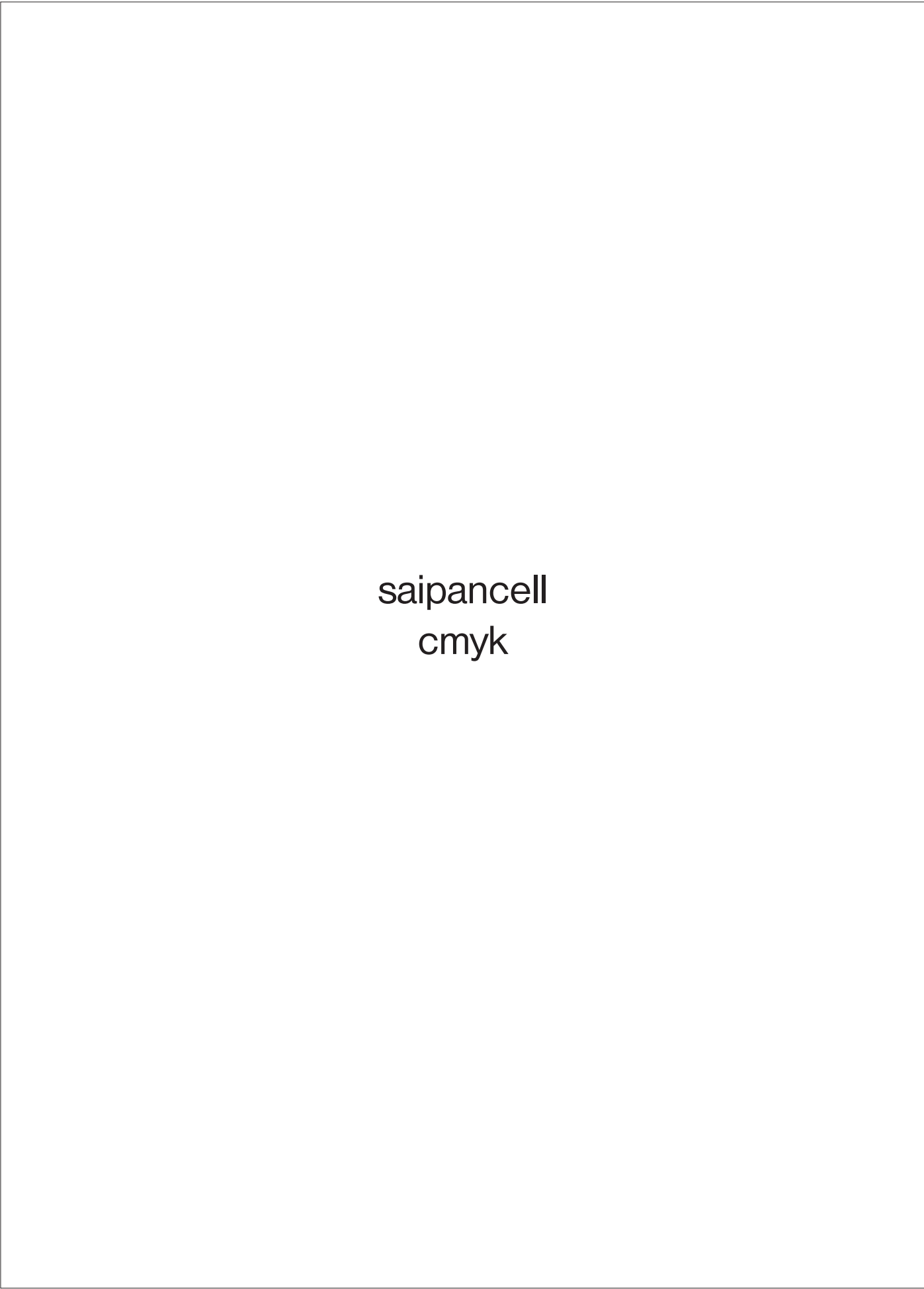
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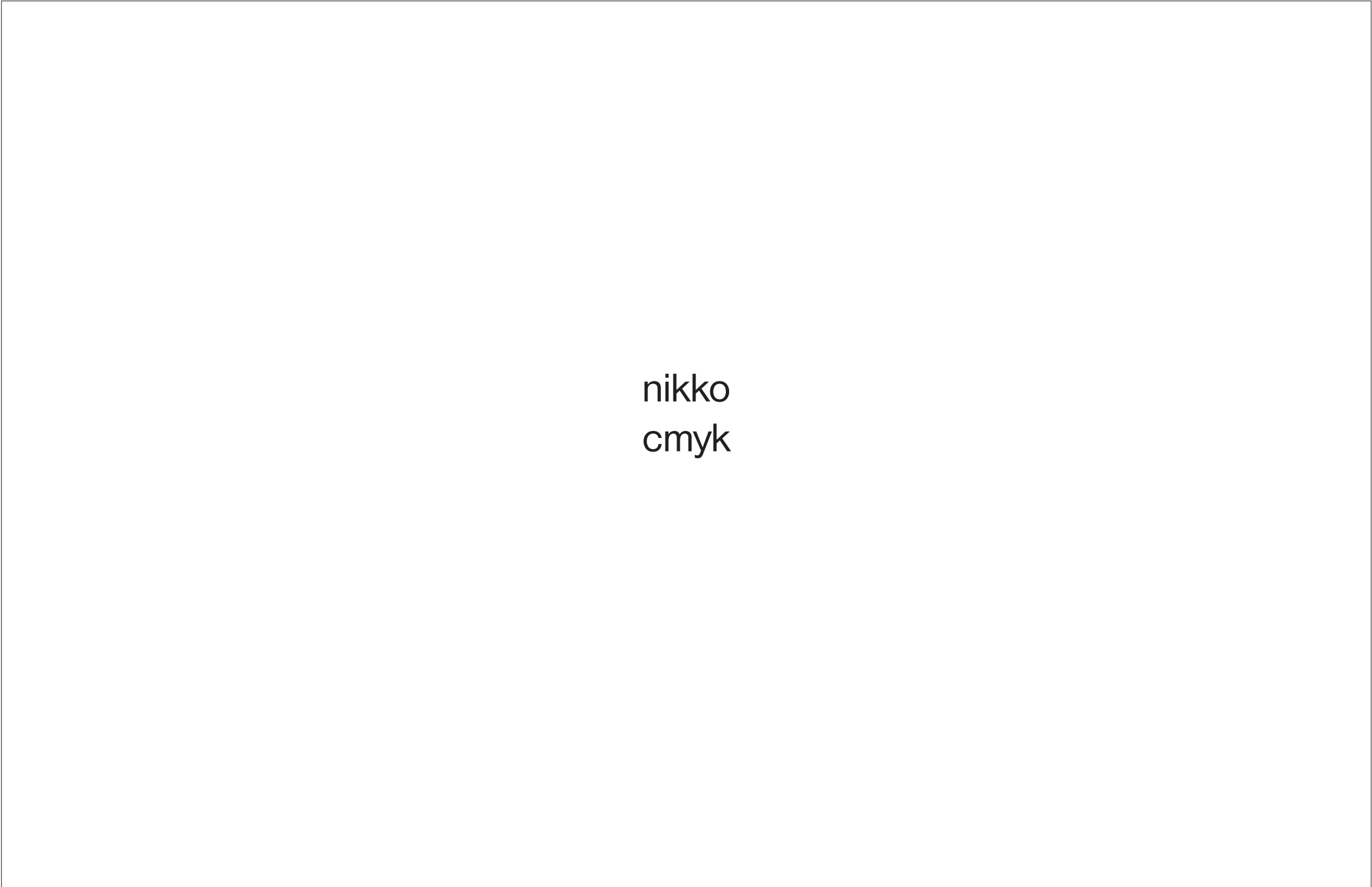


lottery



saipancell
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JAMA



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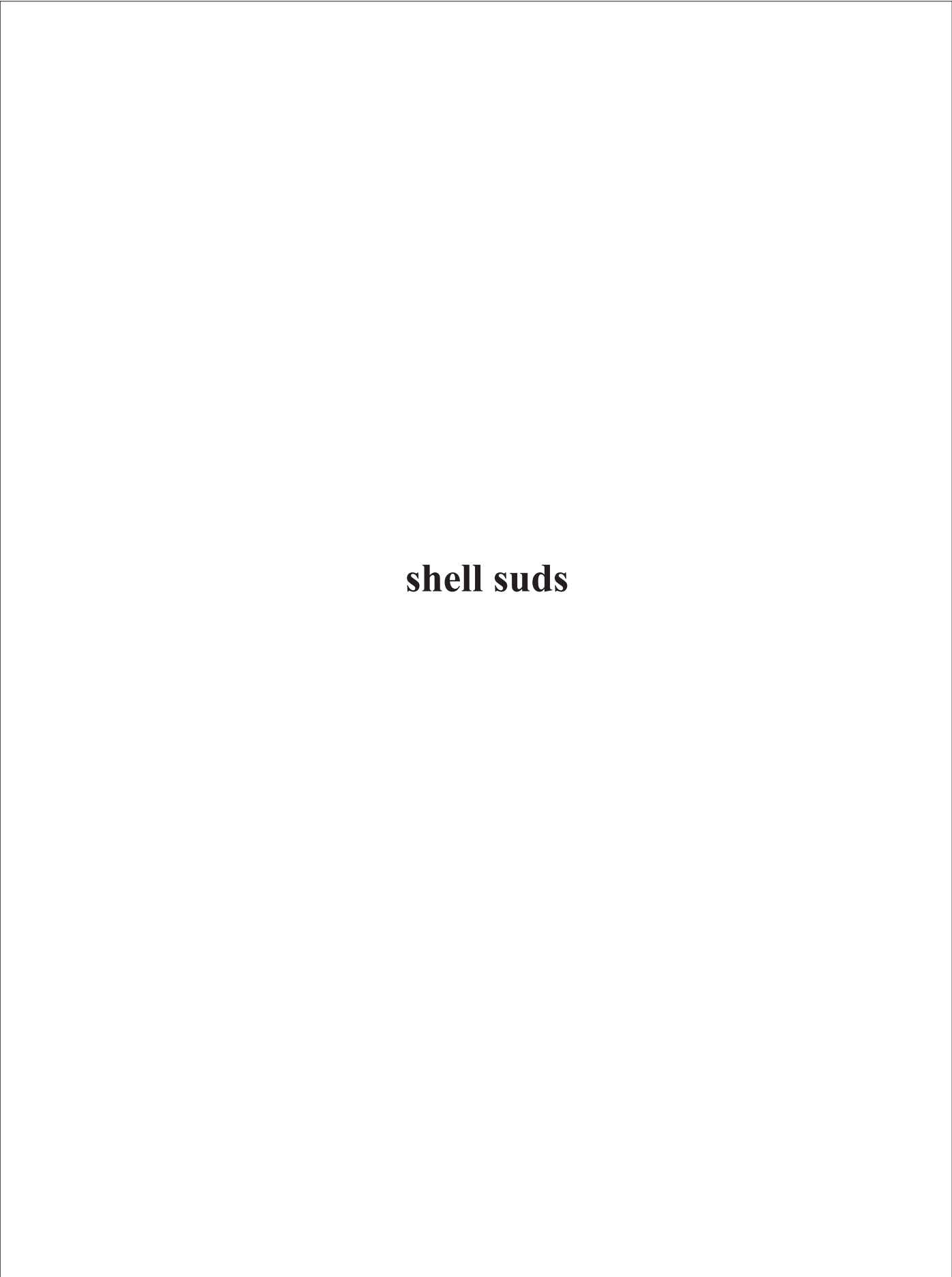
cpa

townhouse
+green

VERIZON
CMYK

World

shell visor
cmyk



shell suds

JOETEN MOTORS
+BLUE/RED



ASIAN Briefs

Report: Japan approves plan to extend Iraq troop dispatch

TOKYO (AP)—Japan's ruling coalition parties on Thursday approved a plan to keep Japanese troops in Iraq for another year, Japanese media reported, setting the stage for the Cabinet to extend the mission later in the day.

The Liberal Democratic Party's general council and a senior group of New Komeito Party leaders decided at separate meetings to extend the dispatch, Kyodo News said.

Officials from both parties said they could not immediately confirm the report.

The approval comes despite opinion polls showing many Japanese favor bringing the soldiers home amid concerns for their safety.

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's Cabinet was expected to formally approve the extension later Thursday.

Tokyo has some 550 troops in southern Iraq to purify water and rebuild infrastructure, supported by several hundred air and naval forces in neighboring countries.

Report: Fire, explosion in China kills 11

SHANGHAI, China (AP)—A fire in a factory dormitory in southeastern China killed six workers, while five people perished and eight others were injured in an explosion in a farmhouse in the country's north, the official Xinhua News Agency reported Thursday.

The fire in the Guangzhou province city of Jieyang trapped the workers on upper floors of the three story building early on Wednesday morning, Xinhua said.

Sixteen others were rescued and fire investigators suspect paper boxes and straw baskets stored in the building may have contributed to the blaze, the report said.

In a separate report, Xinhua said police believe illegal production of fireworks may have caused the blast in a farmhouse on the outskirts of the city of Xi'an on Wednesday afternoon.

Such production is common throughout China, frequently leading to deadly explosions due to unsafe handling and storage of gunpowder.

Gunmen kidnap 80 women rescued from brothel

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP)—About 30 men and women, some armed with handguns, attacked a shelter in the Cambodian capital and

kidnapped more than 80 sex workers that authorities rescued earlier this week, a newspaper reported Thursday.

The attackers surrounded the shelter on Wednesday, assaulted its guards and forced the women—half whom were underage—into SUVs, said Somaly Mam, president of Afesip, a French group helping abused women.

Authorities rescued the 83 women and girls on Tuesday from a brothel in Phnom Penh.

"The girls were very afraid," Somaly Mam told The Cambodia Daily. "They told me the boss of the hotel has a lot of power, and that he will come to take them."

Somaly Mam said two Interior Ministry policemen were on duty during the raid, but were too afraid to stop the attack. She also said eight police officers from an elite unit were supposed to guard the shelter on Tuesday evening, but had abandoned their posts.

Somaly Mam and the Interior Ministry spokesman could not be reached by telephone Thursday.

Afesip will cut back its work due to the attack, legal adviser Aarti Kapoor told the Daily.

The United States said in its 2004 global trafficking report that Cambodian authorities had increased arrests and prosecutions of traffickers last year, but their efforts were hindered by corruption and a weak judiciary.

Report: Malaysian police arrest prostitutes

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Police raided an abandoned pig barn following complaints from suspicious housewives that their husbands were visiting the building too often—and arrested three alleged prostitutes, a pimp and 30 clients, a newspaper reported Thursday.

The barn near Tanjung Sepat, a rural community about 40 kilometers (25 miles) southwest of Kuala Lumpur, had been refurbished with 20 cubicles, a bar serving drinks, neon lights and a sound system, the New Straits Times reported.

Criminal Investigations Department Chief Abu Bakar Mustafa said officers watched the building for some time before they raided the premises just after midnight Wednesday.

Abu Bakar said three prostitutes were caught, but some others had escaped. All three were Chinese nationals who had entered the country on social visit passes, he was quoted as saying.

He said the clients, mostly fishermen and local businessmen, were released after their statements were recorded.

Officers were not immediately available to comment Thursday.

Prostitution is rampant despite being illegal in Malaysia. Many women who work in the industry come from poorer backgrounds in countries such as Indonesia, China and the Philippines.

Divers work to stanch flow of oil after container ship collision

BEIJING (AP)—Chinese divers sought to patch the hull of a German-registered container ship leaking massive amounts of oil into the South China Sea after colliding with a Panamanian vessel, the government said.

The oil tank on the German MSC Ilona was punctured during a collision with the Panama-registered Hyundai Advance

near the mouth of the Pearl River Tuesday night, the official Xinhua News Agency reported late Wednesday.

Divers were sent to patch the leak in the MSC Ilona's hull and eight decontamination boats were sent to clean up the spill measuring 17 kilometers (11 miles) long and between 20 and 200 meters (66 to 660 feet) wide, Xinhua said.

There were no reported injuries.

It was not immediately clear what kind of cargo the two ships were carrying.

China state television on Wednesday night described the oil spill as the worst in five years.

The MSC Ilona was on its way to Shenzhen from Shanghai when the accident occurred while the Hyundai Advance

was departing Shenzhen for Singapore, the report said.

Nepal disciplines soldiers for abuses

KATMANDU, Nepal (AP)—The Royal Nepalese Army said Wednesday it has disciplined 105 soldiers and officers for human rights abuses, ranging from excessive use of force to murder.

The punishments handed down in the last year have ranged from warnings and suspension to jail terms—with seven years in an army prison the maximum sentence, said army spokesman Col. Deepak Gurung.

The admission came as a team of U.N. investigators was in Nepal to investigate allegations that the military has been involved in extrajudicial killings, disappearances, arbitrary


arrests and torture while fighting Maoist rebels.

Independent human rights groups say as many as 1,200 people have disappeared in Nepal, and that the army is largely to blame. Gurung said only 47 people are in army custody.

The rebels, who say they are inspired by Chinese revolutionary leader Mao Zedong, have been fighting since 1996 to replace Nepal's monarchy with a communist state. The insurgency has claimed more than 10,000 lives.

Rebels walked out of peace talks and withdrew from a seven-month cease-fire in August, and local and international human rights groups have expressed concerns about a growing number of alleged abuses by both the government and the guerrillas.

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Tens of thousands cheer Ukrainian reforms

KIEV, Ukraine (AP)—Tens of thousands of opposition supporters, many of them haggard and shivering after 17 days of round-the-clock street protests, chanted and danced in triumph after parliament approved reforms Wednesday to ensure a fair ballot in Ukraine's repeat presidential election.

The surprise vote in parliament was part of a compromise package that also included constitutional amendments to transfer some presidential powers to parliament—but only after parliamentary elections in 2006, when backers of opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko hope to win a majority.

Yushchenko had earlier denounced the amendments as

an attempt to render his likely election victory meaningless, but he appeared to have ended up strengthening his political standing by demonstrating an ability to find common ground with his opponents and solve a crisis that could easily have turned violent.

"During these 17 days we have gotten a new country," Yushchenko told the roaring crowds on Kiev's main Independence Square. "We have realized that we are a European nation. We have grown confident that Ukraine's future can't be stolen."

Yushchenko supporters, who have besieged parliament and other official buildings in downtown Kiev for two weeks, broke into chants of "Well done! Well

done!" But many vowed to keep up their blockades.

"We won't lift the blockade until Yushchenko settles here," said Mykola Motruk, who has led a blockade of the presidential administration building with some 50 other people. As he spoke, his men sang songs and danced in a circle, raising fingers in a V-sign.

Yushchenko said the peaceful protests, dubbed the "Orange Revolution" for his campaign color, had achieved their main goals: the Supreme Court's canceled the fraud-tainted victory of his Kremlin-backed opponent in the Nov. 21 presidential runoff and parliament passed reforms to ensure a fair vote.

"We have done all that with-



AP

Ukrainian opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko, right, shows V-sign to his supporters with his fiery ally Yulia Tymoshenko, behind, wife Kateryna, left, and their daughters Sofia and Khrystyna, as they celebrate the parliamentary vote on electoral reforms during a rally at Independence Square in downtown Kiev, Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2004.

out spilling a single drop of blood," Yushchenko said. "Our conscience is clear."

Yushchenko urged supporters to focus on campaigning for his Dec. 26 rematch against Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich, asking them to join local election commissions and become ballot monitors.

At the same time, Yushchenko did not call on his supporters to withdraw their pickets around government buildings—as other opposition leaders had predicted. He said a sprawling tent camp on Kiev's main square and its central avenue will be reorganized—but not disbanded.

"Those who are ready to continue their vigil in tent camps and pickets will stay," he said.

In his speech to supporters on the square, Yushchenko thanked police and military for not resorting to force against the protesters.

"I want to thank the people in uniform that in this time of trials, they were together with the people," he said. "Thank you for not putting your fingers on the trigger."

He also pledged, if elected, to maintain warm relations with all neighbors—including Russia. President Vladimir Putin has staunchly backed Yanukovich and congratulated him on winning last month's vote while the opposition and the West charged fraud.

Yushchenko emerged from the 17-day political crisis a winner, succeeding in pressing home his demand for a rerun without having his supporters resort to violence.

But outgoing President Leonid Kuchma can also claim victory, by succeeding in cutting the powers of his successor.

The package was approved in a 402-21 vote with 19 abstentions. Lawmakers stood and cheered as Kuchma signed the measure.

Yushchenko said the electoral amendments place tight restrictions on absentee and home voting. The reforms make

certain that opposition members are represented in local election commissions.

"I am confident of victory on Dec. 26," he said in a speech that ended with fireworks streaking over the frigid Ukrainian capital.

"This is a big victory," said one protester, Andriy Stepanchuk, 34, a railway worker. "This is the day when people's opinions mattered."

Under the changes, the president no longer has the power to appoint his own government, but keeps the right to reject parliamentary nominees for the top three positions—prime minister, foreign minister and defense minister. Parliament has the right to appoint all other Cabinet positions without presidential approval.

As the changes were voted into law, word spread quickly among the tens of thousands of Yushchenko supporters, mobbing Kiev's streets and clad in hats, scarves and flags in orange.

Supporters began moving slowly to Independence Square as songs by Ruslana—winner of the Eurovision song contest—blasted from loudspeakers. Lights flickered from flash bulbs and demonstrators waved orange flags and banners from Ukraine's cities. A column of cars drove through the streets honking and waving flags.

Campaigning in eastern Ukraine, Yanukovich said he was "not happy" with the parliament decision, which he said was "made under pressure" and described as a "soft coup d'etat."

Lawmakers also replaced members of the Central Election Commission, ousting its chief, Serhiy Kivalov.

Secretary of State Colin Powell praised the vote. "Ukrainian and Russian authorities are hearing a clear message from North America and Europe, in diplomatic stereo—and that stereo sound makes a difference," Powell said in Brussels. "And what do we say? Let the people decide."

CTSI JOLLIBEE

US Army deserter seeks Canadian asylum

TORONTO (AP)—A former U.S. Marine in Iraq, testifying Wednesday at a hearing for an American military deserter seeking asylum in Canada, said several men in his unit were “psychopaths” who enjoyed killing unarmed Iraqi civilians who posed no threat.

Jimmy Massey, a staff sergeant who was in the Marines for 12 years and served three months in Iraq before being honorably discharged with post-traumatic stress syndrome, made the allegations before Canada’s Immigration and Refugee Board on the final day of an asylum hearing for Army Pfc. Jeremy Hinzman, 26.

Hinzman fled Fort Bragg, N.C., to Canada weeks before his 82nd

Airborne Division was due to be deployed to Iraq. He had served three years in the Army but applied for conscientious objector status before his unit was sent to Afghanistan in 2002.

He is asking for refugee status for himself, his wife and 2-year-old son, claiming he would face persecution if forced to return to the United States. Hinzman’s lawyer, Jeffry House, said he would be the first American soldier granted political asylum in Canada if his petition succeeds.

Massey, who did not know Hinzman before the hearing, said Hinzman likely would have been forced to commit atrocities that violated the Geneva Conventions if he went to Iraq.

Massey, 33, of Waynesville,

N.C., said his 7th Marines weapons company killed more than 30 civilians during a 48-hour period in April while stationed at a checkpoint in the southern Baghdad district of Rashid. The victims included unarmed demonstrators and a man who drove up in a car and raised his hands above his head in the universal symbol of surrender.

“I know in my heart that these vehicles that came up, that they were civilians,” he said. “But I had to act on my orders. It’s a struggle within my heart.”

The orders, he said, were to shoot at anyone who drove into what is known as the “red zone” surrounding the checkpoint because they could be suicide bombers.

Massey told the tribunal he got caught up in the frenzy and shot at civilians as well.

“I take full responsibility for my actions,” he said. “We deliberately gunned down people who were civilians. I became so concerned because I felt that Marines were honestly enjoying it. I saw plenty of Marines become psychopaths. They enjoyed the killing.”

The Marine Corps denied Massey’s allegations.

“We’re not saying he’s lying, but his perception of what the situation was in relation to the rules of engagement, and what was justified, is different than ours,” said Maj. Douglas Powell, a spokesman for the Marine Corps at the Pentagon.

“It was investigated and any acts of wrongdoing, in regards to violations of the laws of war, the laws of armed conflict, were unsubstantiated.”

Hinzman’s case comes just as Ottawa attempts to improve relations with Washington, which soured dramatically after Canada refused to send troops to Iraq.

Hinzman argued that the war in Iraq was illegal and fighting in it would make him a war criminal. He also said he would be persecuted if forced to return to the United States, noting that he now receives threatening e-mail.

A typical term in a U.S. military prison for Army desertion is a year.

“After I would be released from jail, the chances of my

getting a job would be slim and there would be social persecution,” he told reporters after his hearing.

Hinzman is one of three American military deserters seeking refugee status in Canada. Hearings for Brandon Hughey of the Army’s 1st Cavalry and David Sanders of the Navy will be heard by the refugee board in January.

House, an American lawyer who first came to Canada as a draft dodger during the Vietnam War, is representing the three Americans. He said 30,000-50,000 Americans who fled to Canada during Vietnam were allowed to settle there.

The tribunal is expected to make its decision early next year.

Mubarak tries to revive peace talks for Mideast

MANAMA, Bahrain (AP)—Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak engaged Persian Gulf leaders Wednesday in an effort to build momentum toward peace in the Middle East, calling for support of the new Palestinian leadership and talking up the prospects of an Israeli-Palestinian settlement.

Bahrain’s king indicated he shared the new optimism about the peace process.

“There is an opportunity (for peace) and hopefully it will not be squandered as many have been,” the king, Sheik Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, told reporters after Mubarak arrived in his country.

“At present the circumstances sound much more convenient and hopeful,” the king added, according to the official Bahraini news agency.

Egypt’s semiofficial Middle East News Agency reported Tuesday that Cairo had reached an understanding with Israel, the Palestinians, the United States and Europe on steps toward settling the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The report said Egypt was calling for an international peace conference on a Mideast settlement next summer in Washington.

But a key Israeli official said Wednesday that discussion of such a conference by Israeli authorities could be “counter-productive” and should not be raised until after the Jan. 9 Palestinian election to replace Yasser Arafat, who died Nov. 11.

“Before we go into such an endeavor with a lot of fanfare we have to make sure what the objectives are and what are the developments on the ground,” Daniel Ayalon, Israeli Ambassador to the U.S., said during a round-table discussion in New York.

“It could be counterproductive to hold it prematurely before we know who we negotiate with, and what are the policies of the newly elected leadership of the newly elected leadership of the Palestinians.”

Ayalon said Israel had not been approached about par-

ticipating in the July conference suggested by Egypt.

In addition to Mubarak visits to the Gulf, Palestinian leaders toured the region to drum up support. Newly elected PLO leader Mahmoud Abbas and Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia arrived in Lebanon on Wednesday after a fence-mending visit to Syria.

Palestinian relations with Syria, which dominates Lebanon’s government, long have been strained because the PLO signed interim peace accords with Israel in the 1990s.

Mubarak’s visits to Kuwait and Bahrain come amid rising hopes for peace after Arafat’s death, the prospect of Palestinian elections and a warming of relations between Israel and Egypt, which has long played a mediating role in the Palestinian conflict.

The Bush administration has approved \$20 million in direct aid to help the Palestinian Authority as it prepares for the elections to replace Arafat.

The U.S. aid, allowed only by waiving existing law, is meant to help the cash-strapped and beleaguered Palestinian Authority pay its utility bills so its power will not be cut off, White House spokesman Scott McClellan said Wednesday.

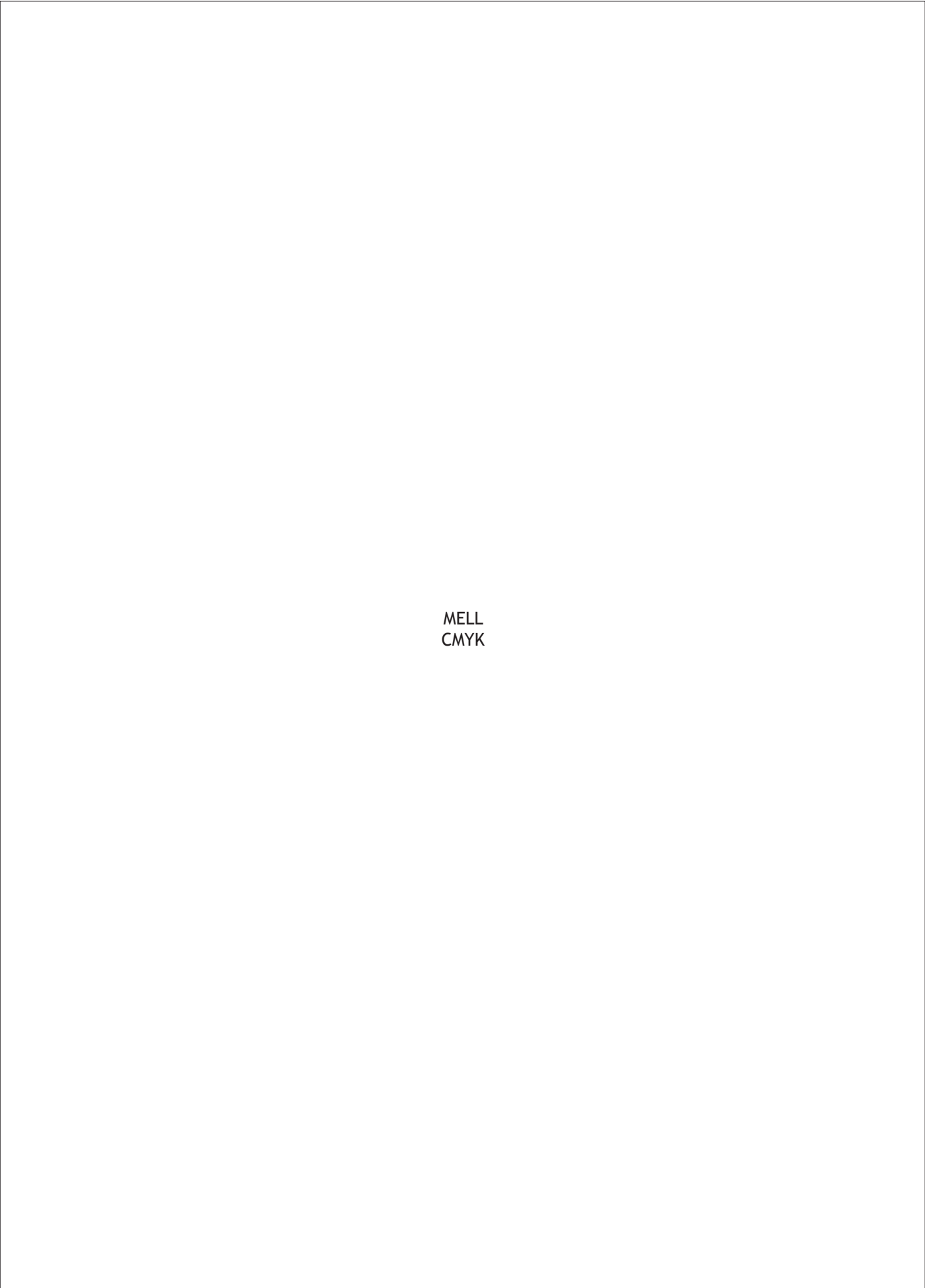
Mubarak did not speak to reporters about his visit to Kuwait, but Egyptian Ambassador Abdul-Rahim Shalabi said the president had discussed “the possibility of resuming (Israeli-Palestinian) peace talks and the importance of supporting the new Palestinian leadership” with the emir, Sheik Jaber Al Ahmed Al Sabah, and the prime minister, Sheik Sabah Al Ahmed Al Sabah.

In the West Bank, Palestinian Cabinet minister Saeb Erekat said the Egyptians had not produced a new settlement plan but were working to support a Palestinian truce, to train Palestinian security forces and to revive peace talks.

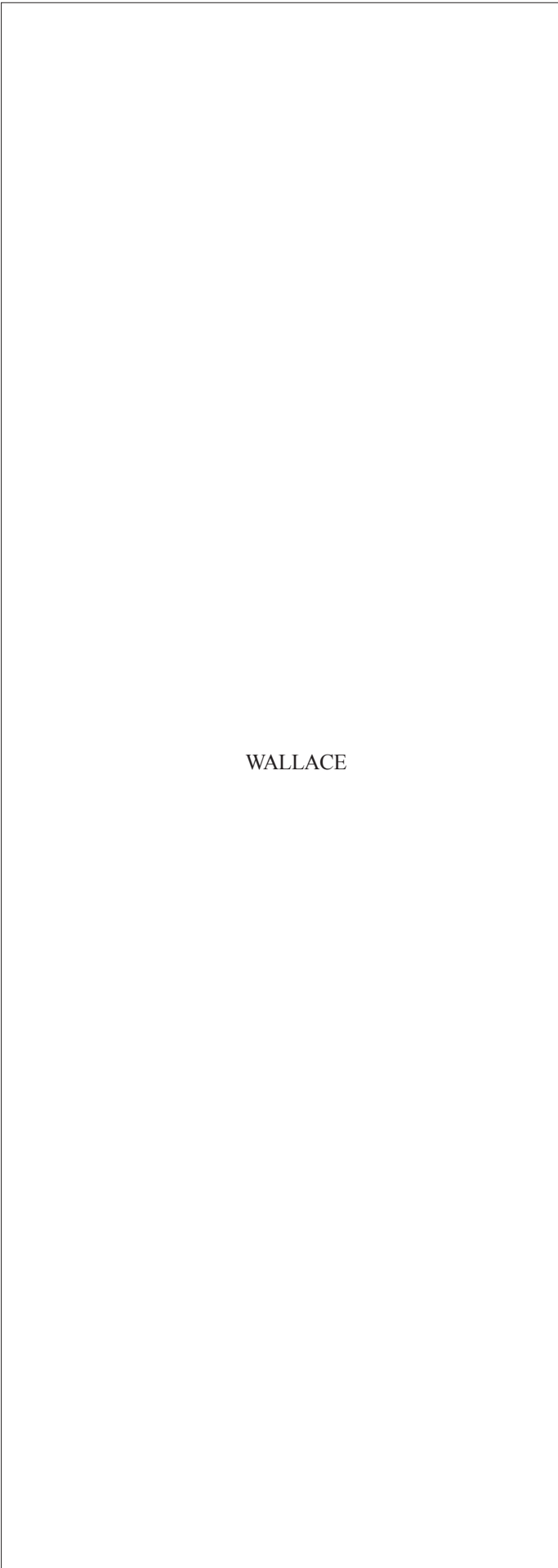
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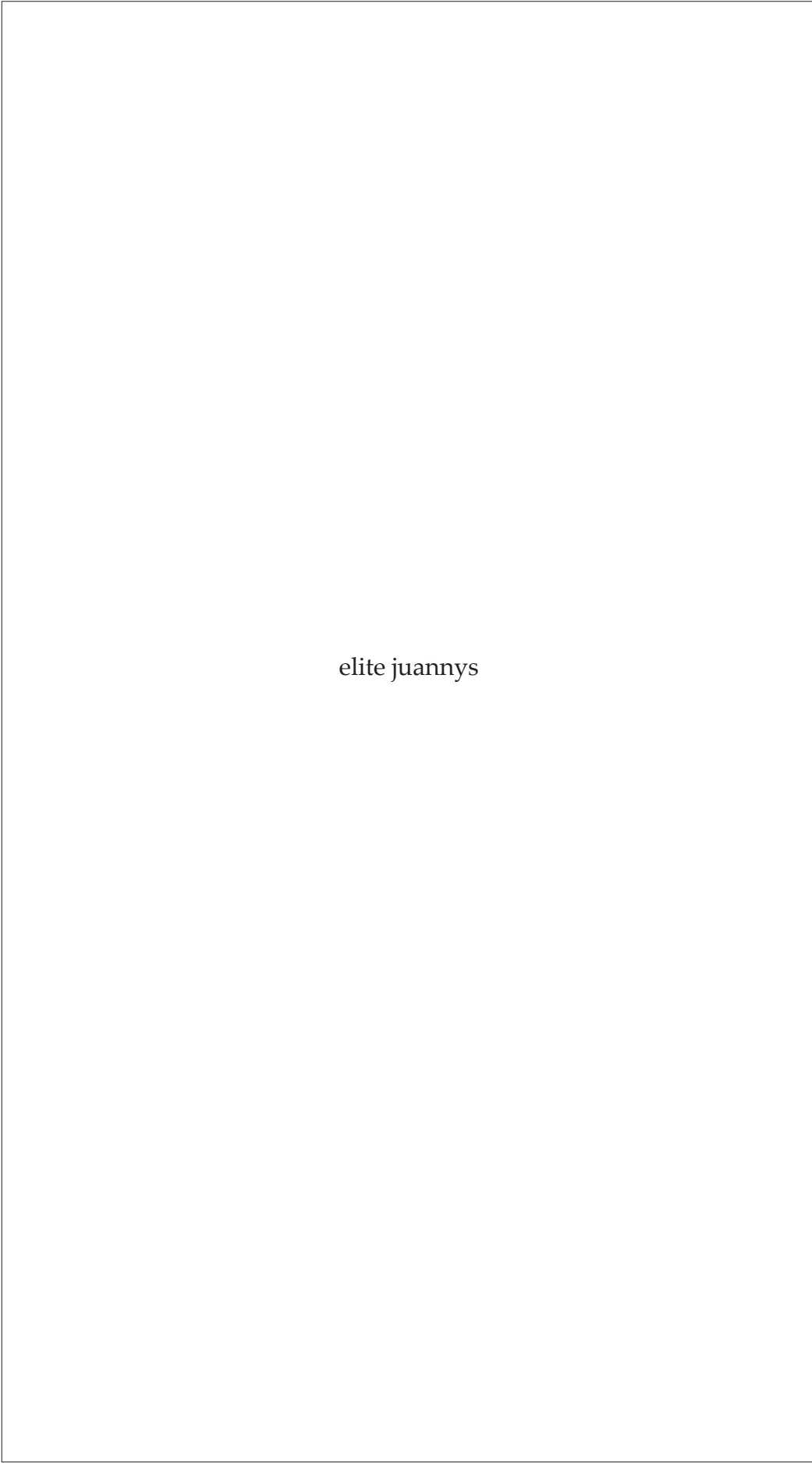
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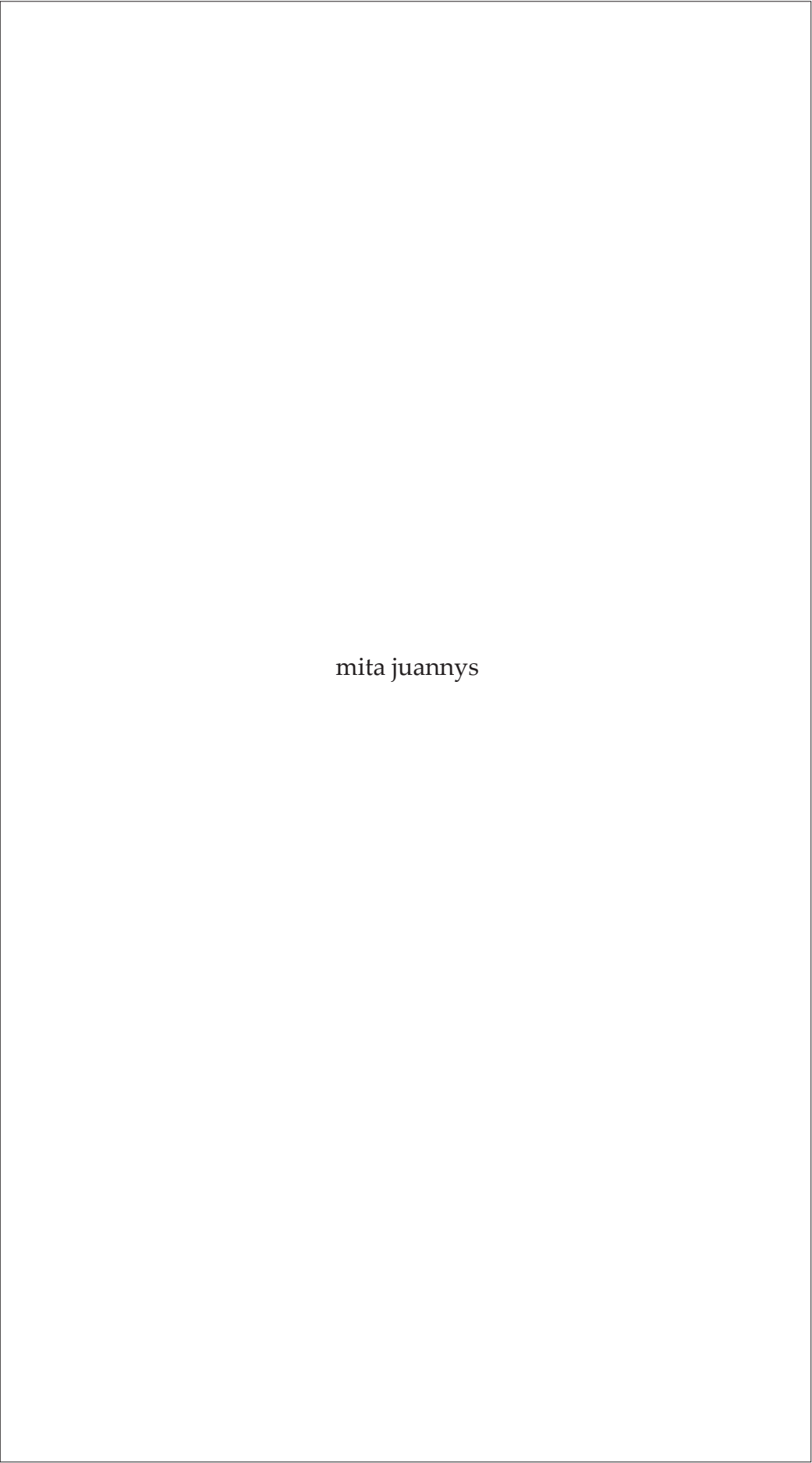
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WALLACE



elite juannys



mita juannys

Usher dominates the Billboard Awards

By CHRISTINA ALMEIDA
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Usher may not want to ring in the new year. This one’s been too good to him. The R&B impresario dominated the 2004 Billboard Music Awards on Wednesday night, picking up 11 awards in the latest in a string of accolades he has earned this year.

His awards included artist of the year, R&B/hip-hop album of the year for “Confessions” and Hot 100 single of the year for “Yeah!” featuring Lil Jon and Ludacris.

The 26-year-old singer opened the show with a blast, dropping from the ceiling on a cord and performing “Bad Girl” while a bevy of beautiful women clad in white parkas and snow boots gyrated around him.

Usher, whose album sold more than 1 million copies in its debut week, also had a big night at last month’s American Music Awards and is nominated for eight Grammys.

R&B crooner Alicia Keys picked up seven awards during Wednesday’s show, which was held at the MGM Grand hotel-casino. Keys took home wins for female artist of the year, R&B/hip-hop single of the year for “If I Ain’t Got You” and Hot



AP
Usher accepts his artist of the year award Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2004 during the Billboard Awards at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas.

100 songwriter of the year.

Kanye West, who has a leading 10 Grammy nomina-

tions, picked up four Billboard awards, including rap artist of the year. 50 Cent won a new

award, ringtone of the year, for “In Da Club.”

The show was hosted by Ryan Seacrest of “American Idol” fame and broadcast by Fox live on the East Coast.

The high-energy affair mixed R&B and rock with performances by Nelly, Green Day and Gwen Stefani. The show also included the first public appearance by Britney Spears since she married Kevin Federline in September; she presented West his rap artist of the year award.

Ashlee Simpson was met with boos and cheers as she accepted the female new artist of the year award. Simpson, the younger sister of Jessica Simpson, ended her speech saying that if people ever feel nervous they can do a “Texas jig,” referring to her impromptu dance during an October appearance on NBC’s “Saturday Night Live,” when an audio mistake made it clear she had been lip-synching.

Stevie Wonder, who presented Sting with the Century Award last year, was himself the recipient. Destiny’s Child received the artist achievement award.

The Billboard Awards honor the year’s chart-topping artists. Winners are determined by the magazine’s year-end chart listings, which are based on record sales and airplay.

2004 Billboard Music Awards winners

- The 2004 Billboard Music Awards winners, announced in Las Vegas on Wednesday:
- Artist of the Year:** Usher
- Female Artist of the Year:** Alicia Keys
- Duo/Group Artist of the Year:** OutKast
- Male New Artist of the Year:** Kanye West
- Female New Artist of the Year:** Ashlee Simpson
- Billboard 200 Album of the Year:** Usher, “Confessions”
- Billboard 200 Duo/Group Artist of the Year:** OutKast
- Hot 100 Artist of the Year:** Usher
- Hot 100 Songwriter of the Year:** Alicia Keys
- Hot 100 Duo/Group of the Year:** OutKast
- Hot 100 Single of the Year:** Usher featuring Lil Jon & Ludacris, “Yeah!”
- Hot 100 Airplay Single of the Year:** Usher featuring Lil Jon & Ludacris, “Yeah!”
- Hot 100 Producer of the Year:** Lil Jon
- Hot Dance Sales Single of the Year:** Britney Spears featuring Madonna, “Me Against the Music”
- Female Hot 100 Artist of the Year:** Alicia Keys
- Top-Selling Single of the Year:** Fantasia, “I Believe”
- Top-Selling R&B/Hip-Hop Single of the Year:** Fantasia, “I Believe”
- R&B/Hip-Hop Artist of the Year:** Usher
- R&B/Hip-Hop Duo/Group of the Year:** OutKast
- R&B/Hip-Hop Album of the Year:** Usher, “Confessions”
- R&B/Hip-Hop Single of the Year:** Alicia Keys, “If I Ain’t Got You”
- R&B/Hip-Hop Producer of the Year:** Kanye West
- R&B/Hip-Hop Albums Artist of the Year:** Usher
- R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay Single of the Year:** Alicia Keys, “If I Ain’t Got You”
- Female R&B/Hip-Hop Artist of the Year:** Alicia Keys
- New R&B/Hip-Hop Artist of the Year:** Kanye West
- R&B/Hip-Hop Singles Artist of the Year:** Alicia Keys
- Rap Artist of the Year:** Kanye West
- Female Country Artist of the Year:** Gretchen Wilson
- New Country Artist of the Year:** Gretchen Wilson
- New Country Duo/Group Artist of the Year:** Big & Rich
- Mainstream Top 40 Artist of the Year:** Usher
- Mainstream Top 40 Single of the Year:** Usher featuring Lil Jon & Ludacris, “Yeah!”
- Digital Artist of the Year:** Maroon 5
- Digital Track of the Year:** OutKast, “Hey Ya!”
- Ringtone of the Year:** 50 Cent, “In Da Club”
- Independent Album Artist of the Year:** Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz
- Independent Album of the Year:** Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz, “Kings of Crunk”
- Artist Achievement Award:** Destiny’s Child
- Century Award for Creative Achievement:** Stevie Wonder

Other awards will be announced in Billboard Magazine’s year-end issue, scheduled for publication Dec. 17.

Jay-Z named president of Def Jam Records

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Jay-Z, who has declared himself retired from his rap career, now has a new job to occupy his time—president and chief executive of the Def Jam record label.

The appointment, rumored for months, was finalized with an announcement on Wednesday by Antonio “L.A.” Reid, the chairman of Island Def Jam Music Group.

Officials at the label declined to discuss terms of the agreement Wednesday. But a source familiar with the deal told The Associated Press the rapper signed a three-year contract valued at between \$8 million to \$10 million.

The ultimate value of the deal depends on whether the multi-platinum rapper can meet revenue and market share incentives, the source said on condition of anonymity.

The rapper, whose “The Black Album” was nominated for three Grammys on Tuesday, will take the helm on Jan. 3. He will also continue to run Roc-A-Fella records, which he co-founded with Damon Dash in 1995 after early efforts to obtain a record deal sputtered.

Def Jam, which owned 50 percent of Roc-A-Fella, also announced Wednesday that it had wholly purchased the rap label, whose acts include the 10-time Grammy nominee Kanye West, Cam’ron and Beanie Sigel, who recently received a one-year prison sentence in Pennsylvania on gun and drug charges.

Def Jam acquired the remaining stake in Roc-A-Fella for about \$10 million, the source said. A dozen Roc-A-Fella employees were laid off as a result of the buyout, said Island Def Jam spokeswoman Laura Swanson.

TRIBUNE JUANNYS

Blade: Trinity is bloody good fun



There are a lot of people for whom the latest addition to the *Blade* series has nothing to offer. Actually, it's probably most people. *Blade: Trinity*, the third and allegedly final chapter in the big screen adaptation of the Marvel comic about a ruthless, karate-kicking vampire-hunter, is as low-brow as can be. It's a perfect example of style over substance; plot is passed over for slickly produced action sequences. Looking and sounding a lot like a music video, *Blade: Trinity* should pretty much only appeal to its core audience. Cool. I loved it, and it's my pleasure to inform the other fans of the series that the third installment is no letdown from its predecessors.

I'm sure anybody who's thinking of watching *Blade: Trinity* already knows exactly what it's all about, but there might be a few uninitiated out there who have yet discovered its greatness. Because of the fact that they're about vampires, *Blade* movies are often incorrectly billed as horror. There's absolutely nothing scary about them. *Blade: Trinity* is an action movie that just so happens to have vampires in it.

Car chases. Big explosions. Kung-fu fighting. Snappy one-liners. Gorgeous women wielding weapons. Techno music. That's *Blade: Trinity* in a nutshell. Doesn't sound like much, I know, but the production qualities are grade "A",



Wesley Snipes in *Blade: Trinity*.

from top to bottom. From fight choreography, to editing, to special effects, to original score, yadda yadda, everything about *Blade: Trinity* is done right. Should you not like it, then I guess this type of movie just ain't your cup of tea.

That's not to say, however, that there won't be some lively

debate, amongst fans, about how *Trinity* fits in with the first two movies. Writer/director David Goyer (he also wrote *Blade 1 & 2*) decided to take the franchise in a different direction. *Blade: Trinity* is still a dark movie, but it's significantly more light-hearted than either of the first two.

Wesley Snipes's title character spends a little less time on screen than we're used to, to make way for a pair of pasty sidekicks, played by Jessica Biel (*The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, TV series *7th Heaven*) and Ryan Reynolds (*National Lampoon's Van Wilder*, TV series *Three Guys, a Girl, and a Pizza Place*). One can only wonder why the duo has such a prominent role. Is there going to be a spin-off? Do the producers think they can attract a wider audience with younger, whiter stars? Hmm...

At the open of *Blade: Trinity*, a real bee-otch of a vampire, played terrifically hammed-up by Parker Posie (*Best in Show*, *Laws of Attraction*) resurrects Dracula from his tomb in southern Iraq (hey, maybe that's what Bush was looking for). Immediately afterwards, she frames Blade for murdering a human. Stuck in jail, Blade needs help from his new sidekicks to escape from prison and hunt down his new nemesis.

Blade's new sidekicks are a nice addition. As Abigail Whistler, Jessica Biel is believably butt-kicking. Reynolds' character, Hannibal King, moves between being superhero one minute, to comic relief the next, and his scenes are very funny.

I suppose my only real criticism of *Blade: Trinity* (and this is nitpicking) is that all the characters are too cool for school. Blade, with a hairdo straight from 1990, needs an update. Hannibal is supposed to be

tough, but he wears a ridiculous amount of eyeliner. Dudes aren't supposed to wear eyeliner. Dracula, for some reason, looks like a villain from *The Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* half the time, and the rest of the time looks like he's been made-over by *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*. Dracula is totally metrosexual. And what's with the product placement? Abigail Whistler is so cool that she listens to MP3s on her iPod, while killing vampires. I now officially hate Apple Computers.

Supposedly, this is the end of the *Blade* series. I doubt it.

Blade 2 made more than the original, and I expect *Blade: Trinity* to top its predecessors, in the box office. In his directorial debut, David Goyer has done well, and we should expect more of him to come (at the moment, he's writing *Batman Begins*). If this does, in fact, turn out to be the final *Blade*, at least it went out with a bang.



By **JOE WEINDL**
Special to the
Saipan Tribune

Comments? E-mail Weindl at jowatchesmovies@yahoo.com.

Pixar delays its next film 'Cars' to 2006

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Pixar Animation Studios will delay the release of its next film, "Cars," until June 2006 as it switches from a holiday release schedule to releasing films during the summer when more children are at home.

Pixar and The Walt Disney Co., which co-finance and distributes the films, said Tuesday that "Cars" would be moved from its planned November 2005 release date, creating an 18-month gap during which no new Pixar film will be in theaters.

Pixar films, such as "The Incredibles," which has already earned \$226 million after five weeks in theaters, are an important source of revenue for Disney, which keeps half the box office take, plus a distribution fee. Disney also keeps half the revenue from the home video release of the films.

The theatrical release of its films also provides the largest single source of income for Pixar, which also sees spikes in revenue after the home video release of its movies and steady, although lower, income through the year from video releases of older films and software sales.

Pixar shares fell \$1.13, or



AP

In this undated animated frame released by Pixar of the studios recent computerized movie, "The Incredibles," shows The Incredibles family: speedy 10-year old Dash, left, shy teenager Violet, second from left, the strong and heroic Mr. Incredible, center, and ultra-flexible Elastigirl as they race to save the day.

a little over 1 percent, during regular trading on the Nasdaq. In after hours trading after the news was announced, Pixar shares fell \$3.46, or 3.8 percent to \$87.60.

Shares of Disney were down 22 cents to \$27.10 at the end of regular trading on the New York Stock Exchange.

Last month, Pixar chief executive Steve Jobs told analysts that the company was contemplating a switch to summer releases in part because children are out of school during the summer. A summer theatrical

release also means the home video will be released during the holiday season, when people are looking to buy gifts.

"Cars' longs to be a summer movie," Jobs said in a statement Tuesday. "We plan to finish 'Cars' on its original schedule and look forward to 'Cars' and our future films benefiting by summer theatrical releases and holiday DVD releases."

"Cars" is the last film in a five-picture deal between Pixar and Disney. Pixar is already working on its next, as yet untitled, film, which was set to

be released in 2006, but will be pushed back to 2007.

The delay also gives Pixar more time to negotiate a new distribution deal with another studio. Likely contenders include Warner Bros. and Twentieth Century Fox.

Last month, Jobs said he was waiting to conduct serious talks on a new deal until after Disney announces a successor to chief executive Michael Eisner. Jobs said the announcement, due next June, would trigger a game of musical chairs among studio executives.

WALLACE

Film star seeks secondary role on day-care application

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I star in adult films. I am not ashamed of what I do, but sometimes other people's reaction to my profession can be severe.

I am trying to get my 4-year-old daughter, "Ashley," accepted into an exclusive religious day care. The problem is that on the application I am to state my profession, as well as her father's. My husband, "Rex," is also in the adult film industry.

Rex thinks we should just lie. I want my daughter to be accepted, but I know Ashley will be turned down if they find out we lied on the application. What do you think?

"TEMPEST" IN L.A.



Dear Abby

DEAR TEMPEST: You don't have to lie. State that you are in the movie business. Just don't mention that the movies you're in are "blue," and cross your fingers that you don't run into any fans.

DEAR ABBY: Our 31-year-old son is being married soon in the Midwest. We would like to know what our financial responsibilities are—if any—regarding the costs of the wedding, in light of the following:

1. Our travel expenses will be about \$1,500, plus an additional \$500 for hotel and food.
2. Although 100 guests are invited, we do not know them, as they are all friends and relatives of the bride and her parents.
3. We are giving our son and his bride a gift of \$1,000.
4. We have no say in the planning of the wedding.

We want to do what is right, but we don't want to pay unless tradition or etiquette demands it. Please advise.

PUZZLED PARENTS IN OREGON

DEAR PUZZLED PARENTS: Although it is not obligatory, it is customary for the groom's parents to host the rehearsal dinner the night before the wedding. The guests should include the bridal party, the bride's parents, the fiances and/or live-in companions of the bridesmaids and ushers, and the clergy who will officiate. The bride's mother can help you select an appropriate restaurant.

DEAR ABBY: Two former teachers made an incredible impact on my life. Both encouraged me to stretch far beyond what I thought possible for myself. They pushed and nudged me, praising my efforts in pursuing my dreams. I promised myself I'd contact them "one day" to let them know how much they influenced my life.

A few months ago, I finally contacted my old high school to see if I could locate them. To my dismay, I learned that one had been killed in a car accident the year before, and the other had gone to the hospital last spring and passed away without ever going home.

I feel terrible. I never had the chance to tell two wonderful people how much they mattered. Please urge your readers to stop right now and make that call. We may never have the chance again.

TOO LATE IN CLEVELAND

DEAR TOO LATE: That's a lesson I'm sorry you learned the hard way. Kind thoughts are meant to be shared; they do no one any good if you keep them to yourself. To paraphrase a poem I heard years ago: "If you're ever going to love me, love me now. Don't wait until I'm gone and have it chiseled on my headstone; let me hear it while I'm living, so I can enjoy it."

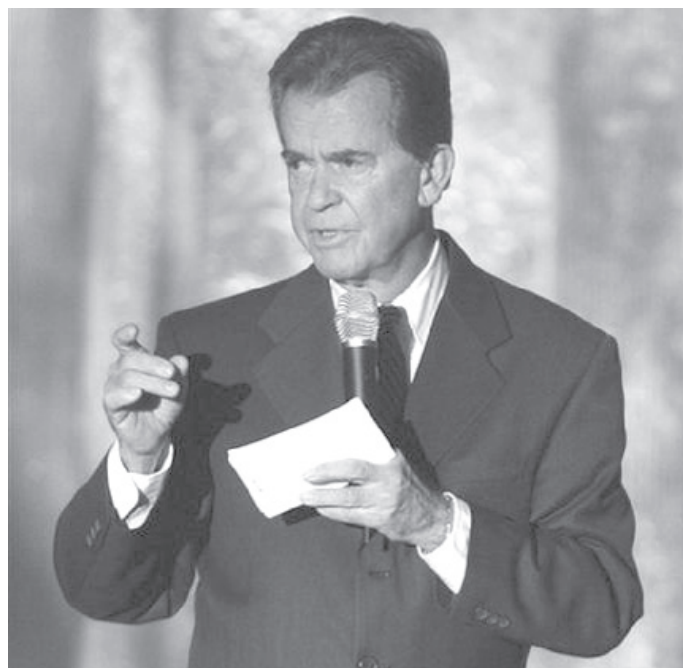
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

TV icon Dick Clark suffers mild stroke

BURBANK, Calif. (AP)—"American Bandstand" icon Dick Clark was hospitalized this week after suffering a mild stroke. Clark, who turned 75 on Nov. 30, suffered the stroke this week, publicist Paul Shefrin said Wednesday, declining to give any details. He would only say Clark had been hospitalized in the Los Angeles area.

The entertainer, who went from hosting "American Bandstand" to game shows and producing awards ceremonies, is scheduled to host ABC's "Dick Clark's Primetime New Year's Rockin' Eve 2005" and "Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve 2005" on Dec. 31. It will be his 33rd year welcoming in the new year.



"The doctors tell me I should be back in the swing of things before too long so I'm hopeful to be able to make it to Times Square to help lead the country in ringing in the new year once again," Clark said in a statement Wednesday.

Shefrin would only say Clark "is recuperating" and that there's no cause for alarm. Clark disclosed last year that he has diabetes.

Clark produces the American Music Awards, Academy of Country Music Awards and Golden Globe Awards.

Dick Clark instructs the audience prior to the taping of the Family Television Awards on July 31, 2002, in Beverly Hills, Calif.

AP

'Apprentice' contender Kelly not popular

NEW YORK (AP)—Donald Trump has fired the field of 15 candidates down to the final four on the second season of NBC's "The Apprentice"—but one contender is unpopular with his peers.

Following their firings, many candidates expressed not-so-nice comments about software executive Kelly Perdew, 37, the oldest "Apprentice" contestant.

"Personally, I don't care for the guy," Chris Russo, who was fired in week 10 of the 15-week job interview, told The Associated Press after his dismissal.

Other fired candidates have expressed similar sentiments, with outspoken Raj Bhakta taking his disapproval a step further. "He's just like a pretty humanless fellow," Bhakta told the AP. "He lacks any chutzpah."

Andy Litinsky, who went head-to-head with Perdew as an opposing project manager, agreed with Bhakta.

"As far as Kelly's likeability factor, I don't want to get negative," Litinsky said. "I would say Raj's characterization is correct."

Unlike other reality shows such as CBS' "Survivor," the opinions of "Apprentice" firees don't matter because Trump decides who wins the job with the Trump Organization and a six-figure salary.

On Thursday's upcoming episode, the final four candidates will go through a series of interviews with executives such as Dawn Hudson, president of Pepsi-Cola North America, and Robert Kraft, owner of the New England Patriots.

Following the boardroom grilling, two candidates will be eliminated. The two remaining candidates will each organize a charity polo match and basketball tournament with the help—or hindrance—of fired candidates.

The winner will hear the words "you're hired" during the live three-hour finale broadcast from New York's Lincoln Center on Dec. 16.

Ivana Ma, the most recently fired candidate, had a different point of view about Perdew, a former officer in the U.S. Army who has created several Web sites including a personal site where he dispenses entrepreneurial advice.

"I thought Kelly was great," Ma said. "I didn't really notice any tension."

Martha Stewart to get new TV show

NEW YORK (AP)—Martha Stewart will revive her daily homemaking show next September, this time with a live audience, celebrity guests and the help of "The Apprentice" producer Mark Burnett, it was announced Wednesday.

Stewart, in prison and not allowed to conduct business, was not involved in the deal with NBC Universal to syndicate the show but is "very pleased," said Susan Lyne, president of Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia.

NBC-owned stations in 14 major cities have already agreed to air the daytime show, and deals will be sought in other cities.

"Millions of people feel that Martha got a raw deal," Burnett said. "America loves comeback stories."

Stewart and her former stockbroker were convicted in March of lying to investigators about why she sold ImClone Systems Inc. stock in 2001. Stewart, who's appealing her conviction, is serving a five-month sentence at a minimum-security federal prison for women in Alderson, W.Va. She'll be released next March.

For five months after that, she will be fitted with an ankle bracelet and confined to her Bedford, N.Y., estate, but allowed to conduct business for 48 hours a week.

Her old show, "Martha Stewart Living," was put on hiatus last summer after its 11th season. The domestic diva will tread familiar territory on the yet-to-be-titled new show, including cooking, entertaining, decorating and home renovation.

Burnett said he watched several hours of outtakes from "Martha Stewart Living" and often found them more entertaining and reflective of her personality than the show itself. Interaction with a studio audience and guests will add a new element to what she does, he said.

Judging by celebrities who turned out at Stewart's trial to offer support—Rosie O'Donnell, Bill Cosby and Brian Dennehy—Burnett said he expected many to be willing to appear as guests.

Stewart went into prison

promising to learn something new every day, Lyne said. "Knowing her, I am convinced that much of it will end up on the show," she said.

Burnett and NBC Universal Television Group chief Jeff Zucker would not comment on whether they have any prime-time plans for Stewart, including whether she might someday be a candidate to replace Donald Trump on "The Apprentice."

At a news conference at Martha Stewart Living headquarters in Manhattan, the executives took pains to say they had not talked business with Stewart since her sentence started. Burnett said he and Zucker first met with her last spring.

"I cannot wait until she gets out of jail and we can start to work together," he said.

Her old show had been slowly fading in the ratings before being put on hold.

Still, her return "has a pretty good shot," said Bill Carroll, an expert on television syndication for Katz Television.



Stewart

Rapper DMX pleads guilty to DUI charge

NEW YORK (AP)—Rapper DMX pleaded guilty Wednesday to driving under the influence of drugs when he plowed through the gates of an airport parking lot after claiming to be a federal agent.

The 33-year-old rapper, whose real name is Earl Simmons, also pleaded guilty to reckless endangerment, prosecutors said. The DUI charge was for the rapper's admission that he was on Valium during the incident. Both charges are misdemeanors.

Simmons was sentenced to a conditional discharge, meaning any violations within a year would land him in jail. He also was fined and ordered to forfeit his 1998 Ford Expedition sport utility vehicle—which was equipped with a flashing light and siren.

Simmons allegedly crashed the SUV on June 24 after ordering a parking lot attendant at Kennedy Airport to let him leave because he was a federal agent. At an adjacent lot, he then tried to drag out the driver of another vehicle, identifying himself as an FBI agent.

A co-defendant also was sentenced to a conditional discharge for disorderly conduct.

Simmons' lawyer, Murray Richman, called the deal "a good disposition for the matter that was blown greatly out of proportion."

In a previous run-in with the law, DMX was fined and ordered to make public service announcements for the Humane Society after police found crack pipes, a pistol and 13 pit bulls at his home in 1999.



Pastimes



Teams snapping up free agent pitchers

By **RONALD BLUM**
AP SPORTS WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Jon Lieber agreed to a deal with the Philadelphia Phillies, Al Leiter returned to the Florida Marlins and Woody Williams went back to the San Diego Padres as teams moved quickly to grab starting pitchers Wednesday after the first free-agent deadline of the offseason passed.

Lieber left the Yankees, agreeing to a \$21-million, three-year contract with Philadelphia, and Leiter departed the Mets with some degree of acrimony, getting an \$8 million, one-year contract from Florida.

Williams, part of the St. Louis Cardinals' NL pennant-winning team, is

guaranteed \$3.5 million by the Padres as part of a deal that could be worth \$14.5 million for two years.

The Yankees didn't waste any time filling Lieber's spot in the rotation, closing in on a \$21-million, three-year contract with Jaret Wright. New York also has a preliminary agreement with second baseman Tony Womack on a \$4 million, two-year deal.

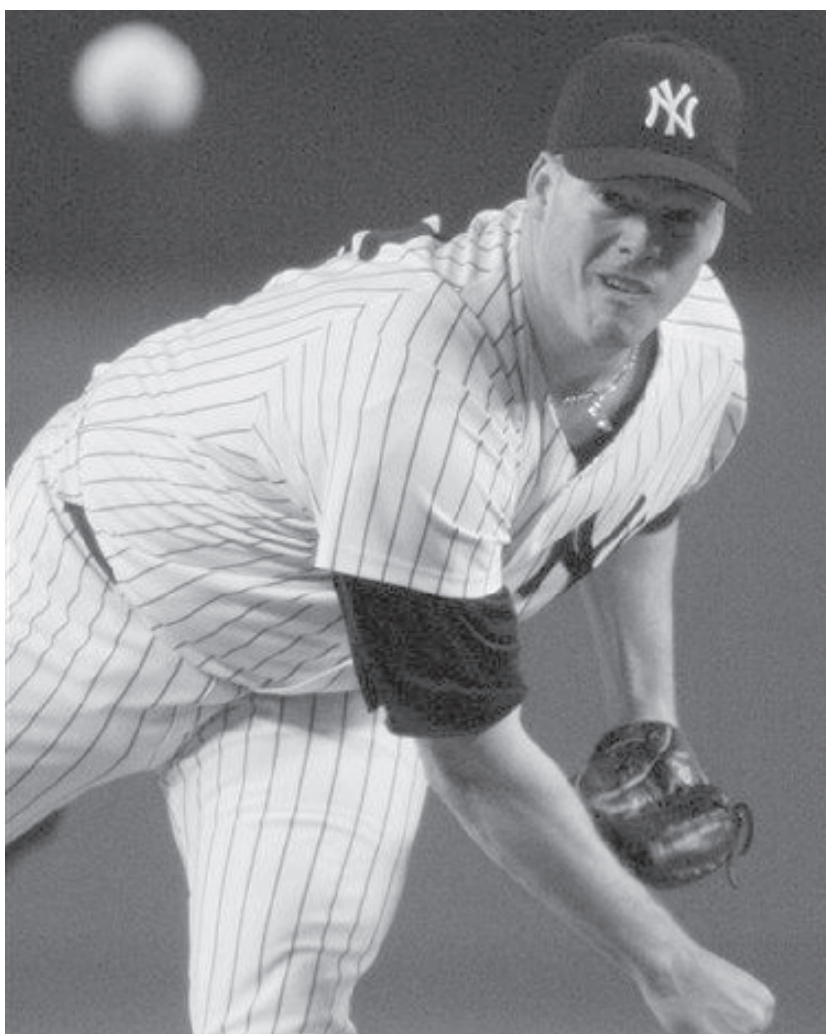
Dustin Hermanson left the San Francisco Giants for a \$5.5-million, two-year contract with the Chicago White Sox, catcher Sandy Alomar Jr. departed the White Sox for a \$550,000, one-year deal with Texas, and reliever Matt Mantei moved on from Arizona for a \$750,000, one-year contract with Boston.

Forty-one free agents, the highest total since at least 1985, were offered salary arbitration by their former teams before Tuesday's midnight deadline. They have until Dec. 19 to accept the offers and can re-sign through Jan. 8.

The remaining 168 free agents are barred from going back to their old teams until May 1, meaning they almost certainly will play elsewhere next year. That group includes third baseman Troy Glaus, the 2002 World Series MVP (Anaheim); first baseman Carlos Delgado (Toronto); outfielder Steve Finley (Los Angeles); outfielder Magglio Ordonez (Chicago White Sox); and pitchers Eric Milton and Kevin Millwood (Philadelphia).

Several players agreed to re-sign just before the deadline, including pitcher Brad Radke, who got an \$18 million, two-year contract from the Minnesota Twins. St. Louis agreed to one-year deals with pitchers Matt Morris (\$2.5 million) and Cal Eldred (\$600,000), along with outfielder John Mabry (\$725,000).

Before heading to the winter meetings, which start Friday in Anaheim,



New York Yankees pitcher Jon Lieber throws in the first inning of Game 6 of the ALCS against the Boston Red Sox, in this Oct. 19, 2004 photo in New York.

Calif., several teams were busy locking up pitching.

Lieber, 35 in April, spent last season with the Yankees, going 14-8 with a 4.33 ERA in 27 starts. He was 1-1 with a 3.43 ERA in three playoff starts for the Yankees, and got more effective later in the season as he regained arm strength following 2002 elbow-ligament replacement surgery.

Lieber gets a \$1-million signing bonus and will earn \$5.25 million in 2005, \$7.25 million in 2006 and \$7.5 million in 2007.

"I look forward to bringing this ballclub back into playoff contention," Lieber said. "I got a taste of that last year, and I'd like that to continue."

Lieber joins former All-Stars Randy Wolf and Vicente Padilla, Brett Myers

and Cory Lidle in a rotation that is losing Milton and Millwood.

"He's a great competitor who's going to go out there and get us deep into games and not give in to hitters," Phillies general manager Ed Wade said.

Leiter, 10-8 with a 3.21 ERA last season, returned to the team he helped pitch to the 1997 World Series title.

"This thing has had a good feel to it, right from the start," Marlins general manager Larry Beinfest said. "It has taken a whole lot to get to this day, but we were always optimistic. We really wanted Al."

The 39-year-old left-hander had spent seven years with the Mets, who offered a one-year deal worth \$4 million to \$5 million during talks Leiter described as "convoluted and fuzzy."

Leiter said he believed the Mets weren't "upfront" and "forthright." He was jettisoned as part of a makeover under new general manager Omar Minaya that includes the departures of relievers John Franco, Mike Stanton and Ricky Bottalico, and outfielder Richard Hidalgo.

"I had a conversation with Al one day and he pretty much asked a good question," Minaya said. "He asked, 'Do I want him on the team? How do I see him in the plan? As the general manager, you've got to make some tough decisions and this is one of the tough decisions that I had to make.'"

Williams, 38, was 11-8 with a 4.18 ERA for St. Louis last season, going 2-5 before winning 10 of his last 13 decisions. He started the opener of all three postseason series for the Cardinals.

Williams pitched with San Diego from 1999 until he was dealt to St. Louis for outfielder Ray Lankford and cash in a waiver deal shortly after the trading deadline in 2001. Padres general manager Kevin Towers called that trade the worst he's ever made.

Bush pushes MLB to address steroid issue

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Bush called on Major League Baseball on Wednesday to take "strong steps" to confront the use of steroids and other illegal performance-enhancing substances by players.

Bush spoke up on the issue—which he also noted in his State of the Union address earlier this year—as players and league management worked toward an agreement on tougher testing for steroids. Drug use "diminishes the integrity of sports," Bush's spokesman said.

"The president believes it's important for Major League Baseball management and the player's union to act by taking strong steps to address the problem," said White House spokesman Scott McClellan. "Professional baseball players are people our children look up to. Players who use drugs undermine the efforts of parents and coaches to send the right message to our children."

McClellan did not spell out what would constitute "strong steps" by the league. Bush, a former managing partner of the Texas Rangers, is not involved in negotiations between players and baseball management, limiting his role to public remarks through the spokesman.

But Bush has relied upon Roland Betts, another former partner in the Rangers, to communicate his beliefs to the league, McClellan said.

In May or June, Betts conveyed Bush's conviction that the league needs "a tough steroids testing policy," McClellan said.

Baseball commissioner Bud Selig repeatedly has called for more frequent testing and harsher penalties for steroid use, stepping up the intensity following reports of grand jury testimony in a steroid investigation that includes sluggers Barry Bonds, Jason Giambi and Gary Sheffield.

Bush praised the efforts of Arizona Sen. John McCain, who has threatened to propose federal legislation that would override the drug-testing provisions in baseball's collective bargaining agreement.

In his January State of the Union address, Bush called for U.S. sports leagues to adopt tougher anti-doping policies and for athletes to set a better example for American youngsters.

White finalist for a second Heisman Trophy

NEW YORK (AP)—Jason White has a chance to join Archie Griffin as a two-time Heisman Trophy winner.

White, the Oklahoma quarterback who won last year's Heisman, was chosen Wednesday as one of five finalists for college football's most prestigious individual title.

Joining White for Saturday's award ceremony in New York will be his Oklahoma teammate Adrian Peterson, Southern California teammates Matt Leinart and Reggie Bush, and Utah quarterback Alex Smith.

It's the first time teammates from two schools were selected as finalists for the award.

Among Heisman contenders who did not make the top 5 were Texas running back Cedric Benson, Auburn quarterback Jason Campbell and California teammates Aaron Rodgers and J.J. Arrington.

Griffin, Ohio State's great running back, won the Heisman in 1974 and 1975 and is the only two-time winner.

White was the favorite for last year's Heisman and beat out Pittsburgh wide receiver Larry Fitzgerald and Missis-

sippi quarterback Eli Manning. This time, the race appears too close to call. White and Leinart, USC's quarterback, have put up similar numbers while leading their teams to 12-0 records and a matchup in the Orange Bowl for the national championship.

White comes to town after passing for 2,961 yards and 33 touchdown, and in a

fine season but may hinder the quarterback's chances of matching Griffin's two Heismans. Peterson ran for 1,843 yards and 15 touchdowns, and produced his best games against the Sooners' toughest opponents.

No freshman has ever won the Heisman.

White, a sixth-year senior, has a

"But a lot of these guys have helped them. So I wouldn't be the one to choose. It wouldn't be fair."

USC has a similar situation with Leinart and Bush. They complement each other, but also could draw attention away from each other when it comes to the voting.

Leinart has thrown for 2,990 yards and 28 touchdowns, with only six interceptions. He is the Trojans' steady leader.

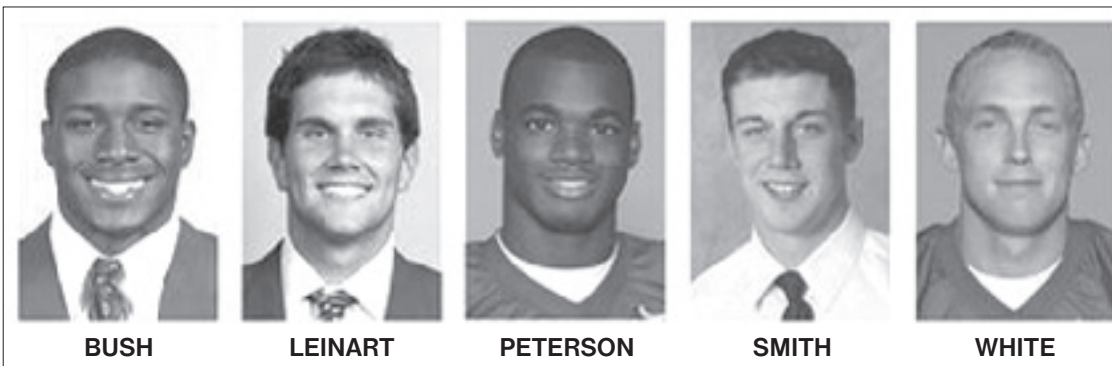
The versatile Bush is their spectacular home-run hitting running back.

Bush's 15 touchdowns have come running, receiving and on returns. He has also thrown a TD pass.

"I think I might have shaken up the votes a little bit," he said after running for 204 yards, including TD runs of 81 and 65 yards, in USC's 29-24 season-finale win at UCLA.

Led by Smith, Utah became the first team from a mid-major conference to reach the BCS this season. The versatile junior has passed for 2,624 yards and 28 TDs and run for 563 yards and 10 touchdowns.

The Utes will play Pittsburgh in the Fiesta Bowl on Jan. 1.



The 2004 Heisman finalists are shown in these undated handout photos. They are: Reggie Bush, RB, USC; Matt Leinart, QB, USC; Adrian Peterson, RB, Oklahoma; Alex Smith, QB, Utah; and Jason White, QB, Oklahoma.

much better mood than last year. A week before the '03 Heisman ceremony, the Sooners were upset by Kansas State 35-7 in the Big 12 title game and White had his worst game of the season.

This season, White threw three touchdown passes in Oklahoma's 42-3 rout of Colorado in the league title game.

The presence of Peterson, a freshman, helped White produce another

Heisman vote and said he planned to pick Peterson No. 1 on his ballot.

Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops can't decide between the two either.

"These guys are tremendous. You see it every week. They complement each other with great running and passing—and it's made a major difference this year, the fact that we're strong in both," Stoops said.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

SPORTS TRANSACTIONS

MLB

HOUSTON ASTROS-Fired Jimmy Williams, manager; Burt Hooton, pitching coach; and Harry Spilman, hitting coach. Named Phil Garner manager, Jim Hickey pitching coach, and Gary Gaetti hitting coach.

NBA

ATLANTA HAWKS-Signed C Jason Collier.
BOSTON CELTICS-Re-signed C Mark Blount to a six-year contract.
CHARLOTTE BOBCATS-Signed G Jason Hart and F Tamar Slay.
DALLAS MAVERICKS-Re-signed G Marquis Daniels to a five-year contract with a team option.
DETROIT PISTONS-Signed F Antonio McDyess to a four-year contract with a team option and G-F Carlos Delfino to a three-year contract with a team option.
GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS-Re-signed C Adonal Foyle to a six-year contract.
LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS-Traded F-C Melvin Ely and G Eddie House to Charlotte for 2005 and 2006 second-round draft picks.
LOS ANGELES LAKERS-Traded C Shaquille O'Neal to Miami for F Lamar Odom, F Caron Butler, F-C Brian Grant and a future first-round draft pick.
MEMPHIS GRIZZLIES-Signed F Brian Cardinal to a six-year contract.
MILWAUKEE BUCKS-Signed C Etan Thomas to a six-year offer sheet.
PHILADELPHIA 76ERS-Signed F Brian Skinner to a multiyear contract.
PHOENIX SUNS-Signed G Quentin Richardson to a six-year offer sheet. Signed G Steve Nash to a six-yr contract.
SAN ANTONIO SPURS-Re-signed F Bruce Bowen. Signed G Beno Udrih.
TORONTO RAPTORS-Signed G Rafer Alston to a five-year contract.
UTAH JAZZ-Signed F Carlos Boozer and C Mehmet Okur to six-year offer sheets. Re-signed G Carlos Arroyo to a four-year contract.

NFL

GREEN BAY PACKERS-Voided the trade of DE Jamal Reynolds to Indianapolis after Reynolds failed his physical and waived him.
NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS-Released S Jason Perry.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES-Signed G Adrien Clarke to a four-year contract and LB Jeremiah Trotter to a one-year contract.

Olympics

U.S. OLYMPIC MEN'S ROAD CYCLING TEAM-Announced Levi Leipheimer will replace Lance Armstrong.

College

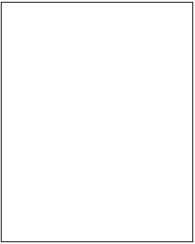
AUBURN-Named Casey Dunn assistant baseball coach.
DARTMOUTH-Named Maribel Sanchez Souther women's cross country coach.
EVERGREEN STATE-Named Kim Farnsworth athletic trainer.
HOUSTON-Named John Severance women's tennis coach.
N.J. CITY-Named Bridgette Quimpo softball coach.
NORTH DAKOTA STATE-Named Eric Viney women's assistant volleyball coach.
NORTHWESTERN-Announced men's junior basketball F Bernard Cote will transfer from Kentucky.
OKLAHOMA-Named Bill Pink director of women's basketball operations.
PALM BEACH ATLANTIC-Announced the resignation of Chris Bizol, men's and women's tennis coach, to take a position with Texas-Tyler.
RHODE ISLAND-Announced the resignation of Boe Pearman, women's basketball coach.
SANTA CLARA-Named M. Felipe Montoro assistant cross country coach and Steve Drake women's assistant basketball coach.
SETON HALL-Named Gerson Echeverry men's assistant soccer coach.
SKIDMORE-Named Darren Bennett women's basketball coach.
ST. FRANCIS, PA.-Named Wylie Crisanti women's lacrosse coach.
TULSA-Named Christy Connoyer softball coach.
WRIGHT STATE-Named Rob Cooper baseball coach.

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

RESTAURANT LEAGUE STANDINGS

Angel Wings	3	0
Country House	3	1
Jollibee	3	1
Capricciosa	2	1
Keeraku	1	2
LSG Sky Chefs	0	3
El Segundo	0	4



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Sports

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